

# THE CATHOLIC ART QUARTERLY

Official Bulletin of the Catholic Art Association

Printed four times a year: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Michaelmas  
at Newport, Rhode Island, with ecclesiastical approbation

VOLUME XIV

CHRISTMAS 1950

NUMBER 1

## CONTENTS

Nemo Dat Quod Non "Got" or The Evolution of a Norm—Rev. John L. Walch	4
An Advent Pageant—H. B.	7
The Beauty of Ordinary Things—Philip Hagreen	11
Painting in the Family—Florence Berger	12
Drama in School, College and Parish—Mabel C. Livingston	16
Passion and Patience Toiled at Congonhas do Campo—André Racz	24
The Clergy and the Carpenter—Philip Hagreen	32
Pros and Cons of Byzantine Art—Dom Damasus Winsen, O.S.B.	37
Student Section	43
Book Reviews	46
To the Editor	48
News and Comments	49

### SUBSCRIPTIONS, MEMBERSHIPS AND PRIVILEGES

Subscription to *The Catholic Art Quarterly* is a privilege of membership in the Catholic Art Association, and includes a subscription to *The Catholic Elementary Art Guide*. Memberships, changes of address and other communications should be sent to the Secretary, The Catholic Art Association, Mount Mary College, Milwaukee 13, Wisconsin.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP with single subscription \$4.00 a year

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP with two subscriptions \$7.50 a year

INSTITUTIONAL GROUP MEMBERSHIP with six subscriptions \$20.00 a year

Membership in the Association is open to all, both Catholic and non-Catholic, who are interested in its aims. Membership includes the privilege of voting in Elections (individual: one vote; institutional: two votes), exhibiting in Catholic Art Association Exhibitions, borrowing Traveling Exhibitions and use of Library, as well as subscription to the *Quarterly* and the *Guide*.



Recent works of art which lend themselves to the materials of modern composition, should not be universally despised and rejected through prejudice. Modern art should be given free scope in the due and reverent service of the Church and the sacred rites, provided that it preserve a correct balance between styles tending neither to extreme realism nor to exaggerated "symbolism," and that the needs of the Christian community are taken into consideration rather than the particular taste or talent of the individual artists. Thus modern art will be able to join its voice to that wonderful choir of praise to which have contributed, in honor of the Catholic faith, the greatest artists throughout the centuries.

*Pope Pius XII, MEDIATOR DEI.*

## NEMO DAT QUOD NON "GOT" OR THE EVOLUTION OF A NORM

*By the Rev. John L. Walch*

Our seminary philosophy professor wished to impress upon our memories the scholastic principle that "no one can give what he does not have." Having a sense of humor, he did violence to the Latin and expressed it: "*Nemo dat quod non 'got'.*"

The truth of the principle is self-evident, mere common sense. If I have no horse, I cannot give you a horse. If you have no candy, you cannot offer it to your guests. If we have no real faith, no real spirituality, we cannot produce spiritual works; we cannot impart spirituality to others.

Now, with this in mind, let us examine the norm which has guided the production

of religious art for the past several generations. Our attention immediately goes to Barclay Street and to the European importations. Both sources flood our homes, our churches, and our prayerbooks with tons of bad religious art and saccharine "holy pictures." They substitute sentimentality for genuine spirituality and show a corresponding lack of artistic talent. The false norm that "*any* artist can produce religious works" must have spawned these aberrations.

A few years ago someone advanced the theory that many French "holy pictures," depicting Christ and his saints embalmed with sugar, must be the work of French Communists giving subconscious blows to



religion, by weakening our concepts of holiness and making religion seem an effeminate affair for pious old ladies, children, and nitwits. Incorrect though this theory may be, it serves to remind us how well Communists know the power of the psychological factor.

Gradually, thank God, we are recognizing that a steady sugar diet is spiritually unhealthy. We are beginning to look for meat. The old "holy pictures" are disappearing to a degree, although in many Catholic magazines, periodicals, and so-called "art calendars," they merely assume a "new look"—the Hollywood look. More emphasis is laid on talent, it is true, but little is placed on genuine religious spirit. So the false norm underlying these more recent works displays a modification. It now reads: "any artist *with talent* can produce religious works." Skillfully drawn haloes are enough; religious spirit will look after itself.

Again, this is but new bait in the old trap. The psychological damage still remains. Pope Urban VIII wisely said that images are the *catechismus rudorum*. If they are the catechism of the *rudis*—the ill-educated man—then how important is it that they tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth! Moreover, images also symbolize the ideas of the well-instructed man. He too is not immune to psychological damage. His mental concepts, no matter how excellent his education, will necessarily be affected by his sense impressions.

This newer approach offends, then, not only by continuing the extreme realism against which the Holy Father warns us, but also by insinuating that Hollywood's skin-deep beauty, rather than Christian virtue illuminating a plain but lovely face, is the model *par excellence* for modern Christians.

The next step in the evolution of the false norm seems to be that "any artist with *great talent* can produce religious

works." In recent months this tempting idea has made headlines on the "Art-conscious" level. I say "tempting" because an artist of great talent is certainly above the average in his sensitiveness and understanding of universals.

In *Life* magazine, June 19, 1950, Father Coutourier, O.P., who assisted Abbé Devémy in the decoration of the much publicized chapel at Assy, France, *reportedly* said that the Church must lay priority upon the creative genius of the artists, not upon their beliefs. This is his answer to attacks upon the project. As the article states, objections were not aimed at the abstract nature of the decorations, but rather at the fact that most of the fifteen "big names" in modern French art who were employed on the job were disbelievers, some even Communists. The fact that Pope Pius XII made a small donation toward the building of this chapel was prominently cited. And this act apparently has canonized in numerous eyes the false norm *Life* reported. In view of a serious lack of reverence for spiritual themes shown in much of the Assy work, especially in some of the windows, not a few eyebrows have been raised. For, contrary to the word and spirit of *Mediator Dei*, the taste and talent of the individual artists, rather than the needs of the community, seem to have enjoyed the upper hand. Look at the photograph of the Assy sanctuary and judge for yourself which appears more important—the simply and directly made altar (holy table of sacrifice) or Jean Lurçat's overpowering tapestry screaming to be soloist in the choir.

Now the first question is this: does not the Holy Father's donation toward this chapel automatically lend an aura of infallibility to the false norm given at Assy? The simple answer: it does not. The Holy Father's private charity stamps official ecclesiastical approval neither upon the norm nor upon its results. Did we not learn in our catechism that the Pope acts infallibly



only when he, "as teacher of all Christians," pronounces formally "a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by all the faithful?" (Fr. McGuire's *Baltimore Catechism* No. 2, Benziger Bros., Inc.) Moreover, Pius XII's words in *Mediator Dei* clearly warn against such things as some of the Assy decorations. If his action means anything, it can only mean that the Holy Father desires to help establish a vital, contemporary, Christian art.

These words are not critical of the Holy Father; rather, they are in his defense. Nor, on the other hand, do they imply that *nothing good* can be found in modern art. On the contrary, we have a great deal to learn from the modern movement. If it does nothing more than jar us out of our lethargy, it will already have served an invaluable purpose. Our job is to cull the good and leave the rest to those interested in art for its own sake rather than for the sake of God.

The next question is this: *can* genuine, reverent, inspiring, religious art come from the brush or the chisel of a disbeliever or a Communist? If the principle that "no one can give what he does not have" is true, then our answer must be: "No." We have only to look at the photographs of Assy, at our "holy pictures," at our present Catholic magazines and "art calendars" to see the point. Not all, of course, offend; but many definitely betray the artists' disbelief in, lack of reverence for, and misunderstanding of spiritual themes. This writer knows for certain that one group producing "art calendars" in wholesale lots in the United States, does not employ Catholic artists to paint its Hollywoodish gallery of saints. The reason given: "As far as we know, there are no good Catholic artists."

If hiring unbelievers is the correct method of obtaining a new religious art—which, remember, teaches as well as symbolizes our religious ideas—then why should not the Church employ heretical authors to write her new catechisms and religious

books? If a Communist artist is an atheist, how can he convincingly portray the things of God or the very God he denies? If an artist is a disbeliever, how can he impart qualities to his work that will make it religiously inspirational? If I have no horse, how can I give you a horse?

We have seen in the evolution of the false norm that emphasis in varying degree has constantly been placed upon artistic talent. If we have talent alone—even great talent—how can we give anything more than merely great talent? Or if we have only a modicum of talent but a great deal of religious sentiment, how can we give anything but work artistically weak and religiously sentimental?

One last question: have we forgotten the spirit of real reverence and meditation and prayer with which Fra Angelico took up his brush?—St. Thomas Aquinas his pen? These are but two of the many illustrious men who possessed great artistic talent and genuine spirituality. If we see anything wrong with Christian art today (and who will deny there is room for improvement?), let us look in the mirror, for the fault lies within ourselves. If we lean upon talent or upon spirituality to the exclusion of the other, we will never produce a great Christian art. The happy medium is the proper balance and coöperation of both.

From St. Thomas and Fra Angelico, as from the fig tree in the Gospel, let us learn this lesson: the thing we need before we can produce a vital, strong, creative, modern, Christian art, is not talent alone, not spirituality alone. We need *both*. The fruit of prayer, meditation, mortification, the Mass, the Sacraments—in short, real faith and spirituality—must be mated with God-given talent. Personal sanctity is the father, artistic talent the mother of a good, healthy, Christian art. The child can come in no other way. Let those who think it can, remember that a virgin-birth took place but once!

# AN ADVENT PAGEANT

*By H. B.*

## STAGE DIRECTIONS

The scene represents the sanctuary of a church, majestic and architectural in character. A table of sacrifice stands in the center, with one or two steps leading up to it. At the ends of the altar, steps are needed for the Seraphim to go up and down at appointed times. During the First Episode, they stand on the top step which should be just below the level of the altar table. On the altar are two thuribles from which incense visibly rises.

A good symbol should be painted on

the back drop large enough to be clearly seen behind the altar. Concentric circles of color with a star in the center would be suggestive of the "star that shall rise out of Jacob" or, "the bright and morning star" that knows no setting.

The costumes, in strong colors, should have good lines and should be simple.

The movement of the pageant must be unbroken, each action flowing from the one before, the music binding the actions together.

## PERSONS OF THE PAGEANT

### IN THE ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE

#### VESTED SPEAKING CHOIR—A

They may be ten or twelve in number.  
The quality of voice should be "light."

#### VESTED SPEAKING CHOIR—B

These, too, may be ten or twelve in number. The voices should be "dark" or "medium."

#### SINGING CHOIR

SERAPH 1

SERAPH 2

#### GABRIEL

He may be one of the Seraphim, slightly changed.

#### ISAIAS

#### JOHN THE BAPTIST

#### GROUP OF PHARISEES

#### OUR LADY

#### DEACON

He says the Prologue and is master of ceremonies. He directs the singing and speaking choruses and audience.

## PROLOGUE

The Church gives us three guides to prepare us for the celebration of the birth of Christ. She incorporates the words and actions of Isaias, John the Baptist, and our Lady, into her official worship, so that the attitude of their minds and hearts towards the coming of the Messiah may become ours. Their faith, humility, purification, and desire are all needed by us so that the new birth of the only-begotten Son of God may be a more vital reality in the Society of the Redeemed.

The way we receive Christ the Saviour as he comes to us in mercy year after year in the sacred Liturgy will determine the way he will receive us when he comes in justice to judge us.

The Mystery of Christ has made the people of every generation contemporaries, because Christ has gathered into One the children of God scattered through time and space. Therefore our yearnings for the coming of the Saviour, uttered in the words of the Patriarchs and Prophets of old,



form part of the one cry of faith, hope, and love heard by God the Father in eternity.

The pageant is not a mere spectacle presented to an audience. It is a religious service in which every one has a part to play. Its aim is to dramatize the Advent theme so that the Liturgy of Advent may be understood, loved, and lived. The audience

will find the words of the chant, *Veni Emmanuel* printed on the programs. Before the pageant begins, the choir will rehearse the music so that all may be familiar with it and be prepared to sing it at the proper times. The versicles for "the audience" are also printed on the programs.

### ORDER OF THE PAGEANT

CHORUS A AND B *enter in procession and take their places on platforms at each side of the hall, near the stage. The curtain rises before the procession begins. The SERAPHIM may be in position or may enter, one from each side, and mount the steps beside the altar. The movement of persons from one place to another is never diagonal nor circular. It is always rectangular and measured. During the procession:*

ALL SING: *Veni, veni, Emmanuel. (This might be done in English if more convenient or meaningful for the audience.)*

CHORUS A & B: I will go unto the altar of God.

AUDIENCE: To God, who giveth joy to my youth.

CHORUS A & B: I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of thy house,

AUDIENCE: And the place where thy glory dwelleth.

CHORUS A & B: Glory be to the Father . . . etc.

AUDIENCE: As it was in the beginning . . . etc.

### EPISODE I - ISAIAS

ALL SING: *Veni, veni Emmanuel.*

*ISAIAS enters and stands a few steps from the foot of the altar, facing wing.*

CHORUS A: Who is this that cometh from afar?

*ISAIAS turns toward the altar, raises his head, stretches out his arms in supplication, and then prostrates during the following chorus.*

CHORUS B: This is the prophet whose name signifies Salvation.

*THE ORGAN plays softly, Sanctus IV, or another.*

CHORUS A: He sees in vision the Lord upon his high throne and the Seraphim bowing before him, crying—

*SERAPHIM make liturgical gesture—arms out at side, raised, brought together.*

CHOIR: *sings the Sanctus to Sabaoth. ISAIAS rises before the end of the music.*  
ISAIAS: (facing altar) Woe is me! because I am a man of unclean lips and I have seen with my eyes the King, the Lord of Hosts.

CHOIR: *sings the Asperges during the following action:*

*THE SERAPHIM descend one or two steps, turn towards the altar, take thuribles, turn, descend. One makes a gesture of taking a burning coal to cleanse the lips of Isaias. The other Seraph stands opposite, ready to join him in censuring Isaias.*

CHORUS A & B: Because the sacred fire has touched thy lips, thy iniquities shall be taken away and thou shalt announce to God's people the glad tidings of salvation.

AUDIENCE: Cleanse our hearts and our lips, O Almighty God, who didst cleanse the lips of the prophet Isaias with a burning coal.

ISAIAS *ascends the steps to the altar and faces the audience. SERAPHIM come to the center, cense Isaias, then turn, walk forward, cense the audience, while the Chorus speaks.*

CHORUS A & B: Let our prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in thy sight.

AUDIENCE: May the Lord kindle within us the fire of his love and the flame of everlasting charity.

*Both SERAPHIM, holding thuribles, turn, walk towards the steps, ascend to original positions. Organ accompaniment.*

ISAIAS: The land that was desolate and impassible shall be glad, and the wilderness shall rejoice and shall flourish like a lily. It shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise. You shall see the glory of the Lord and the beauty of our God. Take courage, and fear not; behold, your God himself will come to save you!

CHORUS A & B: What sign of salvation shall we have from the Lord?

ISAIAS: Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and of fortitude, the Spirit of knowledge and of godliness, and he shall be filled with the fear of the Lord. There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall spring from his root.

CHORUS A & B: Drop down dew, ye heavens, and let the clouds rain the just one. Let the earth be opened and bud forth a Saviour.

AUDIENCE: O root of Jesse, come and deliver us.

CHORUS A: Blessed art thou, O Lord, who walkest on the wings of the wind.

CHORUS B: And on the waves of the sea.

AUDIENCE: Thou art worthy to be praised and glorified forever.

ALL SING: Veni, veni Emmanuel.

*As all sing, the SERAPHIM descend the steps, walk towards the center, then downstage and off.*

## EPISODE II - JOHN THE BAPTIST

GROUP OF PHARISEES *enters from one side, JOHN THE BAPTIST from the other.*

JOHN: Do penance, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!

1ST PHARISEE: Who art thou—Elias?

JOHN: I am not.

2ND PHARISEE: Art thou the Prophet?

JOHN: I am not.

3RD PHARISEE: Who art thou, that we may give an answer to them who sent us?

4TH PHARISEE: What sayest thou of thyself?

JOHN: I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as the prophet Isaias said. Every valley shall be filled, every mountain and hill shall be brought low; the crooked ways shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

2ND PHARISEE: Art thou, then, the Christ?

JOHN: I am not.

3RD PHRISEE: Why, then, dost thou baptize?

JOHN: I baptize with water, but one shall come after me who shall baptize you in the fire of the Holy Ghost.



1ST PHARISEE: What sign shall we have from God that salvation cometh?

JOHN: You shall behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.

CHOIR: *sings the Agnus Dei from Mass IV, or another.* JOHN *exits during the singing, followed by the PHARISEES.*

### EPISODE III - OUR LADY

OUR LADY *enters, walks towards the center and stops before the altar, facing the side. Meanwhile;*

CHORUS A: Who is this who cometh forth as the dawn? Her vesture is white as snow and her face is as the sun.

CHORUS B: She is the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the honor of our people!

AUDIENCE: Thou art all fair, O Mary, and the stain of original sin is not in thee!

GABRIEL *enters, facing OUR LADY who slowly raises her two hands just above her shoulders. She bows her head in greeting, then slowly lowers her hands and brings them together.*

CHOIR *sings Ave Maria Responsory mode VI (Bragers Chant Service Book, page 72).*

Ave Maria, gratia plena,  
Dominus tecum!  
Ave Maria, gratia plena.

MARY *kneels on Ave Maria. GABRIEL raises right arm full length in salutation. He lowers it slowly while OUR LADY raises her head, looking in wonder at the angel.*

Dominus tecum! . . .

MARY *lowers her head, then extends her arms in a gesture of humble acceptance of the mystery wrought in her.*

Gloria Patri et Filio,  
et Spiritui Sancto

GABRIEL *raises both arms full length. Then brings them down, slightly bending his outstretched hands to represent the overshadowing of the Spirit.*

Sicut erat in principio  
et nunc et semper  
et per omnia saecula saeculorum.

OUR LADY *slowly crosses her arms on her breast as if embracing the Christ within her, and his Mystical Body.*

ORGAN *plays Ave Maria. GABRIEL turns, walks off stage. OUR LADY then rises, ascends the steps of the altar and faces the audience.*

CHORUS A: Rejoice, O Mary, because the King of glory hath clothed thee in the garments of salvation.

AUDIENCE: Thou art the Mother of fair love and of holy hope.

CHORUS B: Thou art the Mother of Christ our King.

CHORUS A: Thou who art the Dawn, bring us the Brightness of Eternal Light!

CHORUS B: Thou who art Spouse of the Holy Spirit, bring us the Saviour of the world!

AUDIENCE: Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.



CHOIR *sings Gloria Patri as before. OUR LADY descends the altar steps, turns towards the altar, extends her arms in a gesture of oblation and thanksgiving, then lowers them.*

---

NOTE: If the pageant is given at the beginning of Advent, it might end with the singing of the *Magnificat* in place of the *Gloria Patri* as above. If it is given just before Christmas, the ending which follows below is appropriate.

Some groups might like to present the pageant just before Advent with the ending indicated above and repeat it before Christmas with the ending below. In this case, our Lady should exit toward the end of the *Gloria Patri*.

---

#### EPISODE IV - CLOSING

ALL SING: *Veni, veni Emmanuel.*

OUR LADY *returns, carrying the Child in a formal manner, upright before her, rather than in her arms.*

CHORUS A: Thou art near, O Lord, and all thy ways are truth.

CHORUS B: Thou art our God who comes to save us.

AUDIENCE: The Lord is high, let us adore him!

CHORUS A: Tomorrow the iniquity of the earth shall be blotted out.

CHORUS B: And the Saviour of the world shall reign over us.

AUDIENCE: Alleluia!

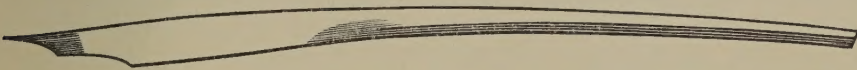
CHORUS A & B: Let us pray—

AUDIENCE: O God, who dost gladden us by the annual expectation of our redemption, grant that we who receive thine only-begotten Son as our Redeemer may safely behold our Lord Jesus Christ as our Judge, who livest and reignest with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God forever. Amen.

ALL SING: Rejoice, rejoice—(the chorus of *Veni, veni, Emmanuel*).

*The End.*

## THE BEAUTY OF ORDINARY THINGS



In all ages, the wings of birds have been a delight and inspiration to artists, whether in Persia or Peru, and when we pick up a moulted feather we marvel at its beauty and handle it with reverence.

This stump of a quill, cut and used and cut again, still has the sure curve that was the theme of all the structure and harmonies of the wing. The beauty of a perfect tool is shown as we handle it. It is pleasant to the touch; round for comfort, yet not too round for control. It does not

roll off the table. It is light, yet strong, and with exactly the right springiness. It splits naturally and cuts to a clean edge. Every size of quill that we can want is at our service. That of the goose gives the normal pen for letter-writing. The crow quill is traditional for very fine work.

Our museums show nothing more precious than the products of this simple tool. If we will but handle it lightly and rightly it can still be for us the key to a world of beauty.



## PAINTING IN THE FAMILY

*By Florence Berger*

It is as natural for a child to draw and paint pictures as to make mud pies or castles in the sand. If we parents are clumsy at it, it is only because when we were little we were not given enough mud, sand, color, and graphite. When many different materials are available, children find ways of using them on all sorts of occasions.

Paints and a low desk easel have been as much a part of our children's background as knives and forks and a dining table. The children can never remember when they were not there. Our greatest problem is to keep the smaller fry from graying the brilliant show-card colors to a dull dark smog. But after the thrill of spreading paint, the children found their crayons less exciting until a famous Cincinnati painter, Mr. Edward Hurley, gave them a box of his oil pastels with at least thirty colors in it. These were large in size and bright in color. They could be applied broadly and gave the children a sense of courage.

Here at home we have also a large four-by-five-foot blackboard that hangs in the kitchen. While the older children are filling the upper regions with designs of their own, the two-year old is working down below. It doesn't hurt the father and mother of the family to try making chalk talks on the same blackboard. It takes real fortitude, I will admit, but then, if you have never had the opportunity to try, it is the fault of your whole education and you are not to blame. How can you help your children and appreciate their efforts and their work if you have never made things yourself? They tell us we learn best by doing and teaching. This applies most certainly to parents in the family.

It is amazing how, in a family group, the character of the individuals is expressed in their work. Each child has his individual differences and they become visible in the picture he produces.

Mary, our eldest girl, has great talent with her pencil and, whenever she is not occupied with other things, she is drawing. We have thrown out bushels of her



sketches. They are good, but she is always trying for something better. Her "quickies" are best. In fact, she has no patience with meticulous work. We hope that the art which she loves will be powerful enough to teach her self-discipline and greater carefulness.

Ann, the next in line, is attracted to drawing but thinks twice before she begins a sketch. Then she works laboriously until it is finished. She likes her products so well that she never lets us clean them out. They all resemble detailed primitives and they are as neat and careful as a porcelain. We hope that the art which she fears will one day give her courage and a greater spirit of adventure.

There was once a time when our children, like most modern children, asked us the three questions parents dread to hear. "What shall we do? What shall we make? What do we need?" I say we dread to hear these questions because, if we think about them at all, we realize that our child's environment is empty, his work is not creative, and he feels a great lack instead of a Great Presence.

"But, Mother, what shall we do? There is just nothing to do." This has too often been the chorus of modern children. They suffer from unemployment much more than you or I did some twenty or thirty years ago. They are surrounded with radio and television entertainment, yet they are bored. Education, so-called, has crammed them full of facts but they are no longer filled with a sense of wonder. Money has bought them all things ready-made and their hands are idle. Yet God has given us a world-full of things to do if we follow his lead and become creators.

"But what shall we make, Mother? We just don't need a thing." Even younger children's desires have become satiated, although they have not yet felt the perpetual prick of advertising. The older ones have become blasé because mere materialism will not satisfy their rising spirit. The

world has grown secular, we are told, and we do not realize that we too are spotted by that world.

"We don't need a thing," we think. It never enters our head that our first and greatest need is God. He has been nicely ignored out of existence. Christ waits on the periphery of our world, wondering when we parents shall begin to do the work he has given us to do, when we shall help our children to make beautiful things.

He waits on the periphery of our world while he would most willingly be the subject of our prayer—our work—our art. If our work were Christ's work, would it not show it? If our hearts were his, would not our hands create in his service? If he is our treasure, would we not show his beauty and glory to others whether in the medium of paint or clay or fabric? Such an emphasis upon Christ and his life as the theme of our work, increases as our activities become infused with living the Liturgy. As a result, our life automatically grows less secular.

We became very conscious of this change in our family as we began to celebrate the feasts of the Church more fully. Many a family has held festival at Christmas and Easter, but a whole new background opened up as we planned for other celebrations in the liturgical year. For example, we now celebrate the feast of the Epiphany, and each year we have done so in a different way which, incidentally, has provided us each year with new artistic possibilities, new creative work, and a sense of God's nearness.

I should like to tell you of one year when we invited about forty guests who enjoyed singing carols, but this time they were Epiphany carols. With heavy wallpaper we had made a long tortuous "road to Bethlehem". This road lay flat on the floor and extended from the door of the living-room to the crib under the Christmas tree. The road was drawn in serpentine fashion and colored a light brown. Towns were suggested by a group of Mid-

dle-East buildings with their flat roofs and pointed minarets. Rivers appeared from nowhere and their blue waters crossed the road and disappeared. The landscape was painted on either side of the road and included mountains, marshes, and deserts. The entire strip of paper was approximately twelve feet long.

We had also written a script telling of the journey of the Three Kings and included in it many beautiful legends concerning the Magi.

In our group of friends we chose three men who were to sing the songs of the Kings, while several others like the shepherd, the camel driver, and the Virgin, were warned that they must take over the singing in turn. The remaining audience became servants, populace, priests, shepherds, and children, as we needed them.

The journey began in Persia where Caspar all alone first saw the star and sang his carol, *O Star of Wonder*. The names of the various carols to be sung were lettered on the road, so the entire picture served as a program of song for the audience. It was strange to feel the Orient brought to our own living-room by a wall-paper picture!

The first King, who was, by the way, a silhouette cut of plywood and painted in kingly regalia, decided to seek out the wise man of Babylon some three hundred miles away. Caspar gathered his camel drivers together and told them of the proposed journey. Past the Zagros mountains they had to climb; I admit they were a little too jagged for truth's sake but they were dramatic! Past the desert plain of Persia and on to the mighty twin rivers pushed the caravan. The landscape represented was purely imaginary, but to both children and adults it set the stage for the next carol, sung by one of the drivers. We chose the plaintive old Kentucky mountain song, *I Wonder as I Wander*, and the echoes of lonely hearts everywhere crossed our paper wilderness.

Balthazar agreed to join the caravan because he was convinced that the star above them was the sign of the Deliverer. The entire company, Kings, servants, drivers and all, then joined in the song of new brotherhood, *Sing We Now of Christmas*. Slowly the men and beasts struggled through the shifting sands of the desert of Syria. Freddie had made prickly cactus all over the so-called desert and Mary had put in a buzzard or two. There in the blue-black of the sky the star spelled peace as we sang *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*.

We reached the city of Damascus, painted with purple towers and pointed arches. The two Kings met with Melchior, the third to join their party. Now they traveled on together and their song was *We Three Kings of Orient Are*.

We were delighted because our guests, who would otherwise have refused to sing alone, forgot their shyness in the interest of the story. Our three appointed Kings were singing solos as they journeyed together like long-lost brothers. Suddenly they seemed to feel the chill of the night air as the caravan passed the great Mount Hermon; I am sure it really never had the snow cap we painted for it, but it looked cold in its icy blues. With all the vigor of marching men our audience sang *Go Tell it on the Mountain*. They reached the marshland near the River Jordan. "We must wait," Melchior cautioned. "We cannot cross in the dark." So it was they made camp and enjoyed the beauty of their star in the *Silent Night*.

Next day they crossed the shallow Jordan and its many pools of brackish water. The marsh was fun to paint because even a blotch of dripping water color looked realistic. The children had really let loose on these swamps.

As the caravan neared Jericho, the paper road became steep and rocky and the passes narrow. Great jagged jaws of stone barred the paths, and caves of darkness studded the cliffs. The children had immediately



connected their painting with the story of the Good Samaritan. They will never forget their background nor that parable, if my guess is right.

Suddenly the road widened at the gates of Jerusalem. People rushed out to meet so rich a company, and we sang the *March of the Kings* in order to lead them to King Herod. Melchior told of their vision, their journey, and their hope; Herod in turn called the priests, who confirmed the prophesy of the Messias. As the Magi left the palace they could hear the ancient chant of the priests crying in the Temple *Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel*.

When the song died away, the three Kings turned toward Bethlehem, for there shone the star and there the prophesy had pointed. The hills around Bethlehem we had painted in soft shades of gray and green. Little white villages were scattered on the slopes. Caspar stopped a young shepherd boy to ask the way. The shepherd's face lighted up with gladness and he told the story of the wonders he had seen on a night just passed. He sang *While by My Sheep*. As he sang, more country folk gathered to tell the good news of *The First Noel*.

The song ended and the little company had not noticed that darkness encircled the valley. In imagination they followed the shepherd, climbed the terraced hills which we had painted and, in hushed voices, greeted the birthplace of their King, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*. The shepherd led them to a cave—which was our crib under the Christmas tree—and there they found a woman very young and very beautiful. On her knees a fine sturdy boy lay kicking his heels to heaven. The mother was singing a lullaby: *'Twixt Gentle Ox*, but the baby only kicked the more as

though to tell his mother he did not wish to sleep. Visitors were coming, and he was impatient to hold court. The shepherds, having been there before, made bold to sing *Although You Are So Tiny*. Children pushed forward to make him laugh and imitate the animals nearby in *The Friendly Beasts*.

At the word Emmanuel the little mother seemed to recall some far-off saying in her heart, and noticed the stranger Kings for the first time. They were on their knees before her child. She held him high as they worshiped him and offered their gifts with the anthems *We Three Kings* and *O Come All Ye Faithful*.

This is the story of our Epiphany carol program. It amused our guests. It was an easy way to insure their participation; but, more than that, it made Christ manifest as a King on this Christmas of the Gentiles.

Each year the Epiphany has meant more to us. We have never entertained the same way twice, and we never shall—unless our audience demands a repeat performance. Somehow I doubt if they will, because each year as the children can contribute more in song and design and drama they take a larger share in the fun. It is the making of these things which gives us joy, while the appreciation of our work in our family is satisfaction enough.

Somehow I can see Christ smile at our paper roads and wooden kings as he would smile at children at play. And yet he gathers them all and shows them to his Father. Here is work done as a prayer. Here are songs sung, and that is prayer twice over. Here too is painting—simple, childish, family painting—and that gives still added glory to the Father, who knows we must use wood and paint and paper for our creations.

We are God's design. He has created us in Christ Jesus, pledged to such good actions as he has prepared beforehand, to the employment of our lives.

SAINT PAUL, *Eph. 2*

# DRAMA IN SCHOOL, COLLEGE & PARISH

*A paper read at the C.A.A. Convention, Detroit, November 25, 1949*

*By Mabel C. Livingston*

This title is misleading, because we all of us associate drama with the theater—with sets and lights and audience response. I want you to consider another aspect of drama—its deep educational importance down the ages and its potential power and meaning in modern education, particularly Catholic education, where the debacle of our present educational systems is honestly recognized, acknowledged and deplored.

I am going to ask you to discriminate between the use of drama in education on one hand and as entertainment in the theater on the other. Drama does indeed belong in school and college in its own emotional significance and close personal application, but the function of the theater and that of the school and university are different, though complementary.

I do not presume to offer anything new. As Dr. Johnson so wisely tells us, we do not teach people anything new, but rather remind them of what they already know, and the significance of which they have overlooked or forgotten.

I shall not talk to you about "Catholic Theater"—a well-known organization, very successful in its own field.

I shall not talk about the professional and commercial theater at all. My subject is *Drama* and its use in *Education*.

## *Education is Character Formation*

We know that the building of character, rather than the acquiring of information, is the real aim and purpose of education. All acquisition of information is secondary to this basic principle of education, *character building*. We are sick of facts. The world is perishing because mere learning of facts has turned out monsters, all their knowledge making them only more capable of evil on a larger scale.

The need for character training is acknowledged, but there is yet no united front on the ways and means by which it is to be accomplished.

*In the educational use of drama and the educational use of the dramatic instinct, I believe we shall find the weapon we need to fight the encroachments of secularism. It is the touchstone by which experience can be transmuted into character.*

## *Drama in Character Formation*

Let us remember that drama did not begin in the theater; it began as ritual. It was a part of worship long before it was used as entertainment in the theater; it was the life-blood of Catholic education in the high and far off centuries of a united Christendom. This is history. (1) But granting that we accept drama as the God-given tool ready to our hand, how can we use it to the best advantage? This question has happily been answered for us more recently than the Middle Ages. The value of the educational use of drama and the dramatic instinct was proved some forty years ago by the success of the *Children's and Young People's Theater* of the Jewish Alliance on Canal Street in New York City. (2) After five crowded years of experiment and study, their inspired teacher, Emma Sheridan Fry, was able to formulate her method. Borrowing from Delsarte, Froebel, Pestalozzi and Montessori, she fashioned practical techniques—techniques based on laws derived from principles, and applicable from kindergarten to college. This method—which we shall call for short *Educational Dramatics*—has been tried and tested by Mrs. Fry's students in the last twenty-five years, and the results have always been gratifying—as you can judge by this appreciation of her work written by the noted Angelo Patri:



"Some years ago one of Mrs. Fry's pupils came to my school to teach dramatics. She handled groups of children, fifteen to a hundred in a group, their ages varying from six to sixteen years.

"Soon a transformation took place in these children. They stood out from the others. They became personalities. Their speech, their carriage, their power of leadership, their insistence upon sifting the facts before them, their command of language, became marked, took on strength.

"As the work progressed the children of the dramatic classes became more and more distinctive. They could be picked out of any group in any class recitation.

"What appealed to me most about these children was their sincerity of thought, their earnestness, their regard for rightness. The words, the phrases, the feeling of the stories they worked on became a part of themselves. Dramatics had forced them to feel language before using it, and then to use it forcefully to express what they felt and believed.

"Ideas became an adventure to be tried out through emotions, tested by moral values; adventures in judging, adjusting and valuing. Dramatics had become a course in clear thinking and sincere expression because it was tied up with the living relationship of the pupils to people and to books.

"A year ago I had the good fortune to work with Mrs. Fry in the *America's Making* pageant. Four schools were concerned in this undertaking. At first it seemed a difficult, almost impossible task to coördinate four different schools with their great groups of children and teachers.

"Seven hundred children and about seventy teachers took part in the performance. To preserve the child's personality, to get the child to see his part in the scheme clearly, to weld the great group into a harmonious whole with a common aim and an individual responsibility, was Mrs. Fry's task.

"Again I saw children busily measuring themselves, their neighbors, their works, their ideas. I saw them adjusting, adding and discarding, and always, always, thinking clearly. Again I saw children stand out as personalities and express their ideas with a color and power and emotion unheard of in the ordinary life of the public schools. The pageant was wonderfully conceived and beautifully carried out."

This method of *Educational Dramatics*, or more fully *The Educational Use of the Dramatic Instinct in Character Formation*, is based on natural principles, and traditions that have come down to us through the ages, in the literature and the temple rituals of Greece, India, Persia, Egypt, in the teachings of the Greek philosophers and in the writings of saints and scholars.

#### *Definitions*

That we may without confusion understand each other, I must ask you to accept the following definitions of 1. Drama, 2. The Dramatic Instinct, 3. Expression and its time sequence.

1. DRAMA—The oldest Greek definition of drama that I have found is "a thing done; a becoming; significant action resulting from conflict, choice and decision; cause and effect brought into close relation, the decision momentous for good or evil."

Shall we say drama is "a quality that enters into and radiates from a situation, when cause and effect are so displayed that the significance of the relation of details to each other assumes unexpected or otherwise provocative value"? Drama, then, is not confined to the stage, though its emotional appeal is the essence of acted drama, and it is drama that gives to the commercial theater its immortal appeal.

Unfortunately, our modern professional theater does not truly represent drama. It has lost its touch with life and has degenerated into a mere "show." Too often Broadway and Hollywood offer only lavish productions, trick lighting, indecent dancing, wisecracks, salacious dialogue and

frankly prurient plots and situations.

Many people feel that the modern theater is not fulfilling its highest function, that it needs to be rescued from commercialism and reunited with sound principles of art and with Christian ideals. But surely, even if this is admitted, the obligation to do this does not rest upon Catholic schools and colleges.

Please do not think that I underrate the deep significance of the theater and its high function in civilization all down the ages. I believe it to be the very crown of human achievements, embracing all the arts, and summing up the meaning of life in a pageantry that all who run may read. But even at its highest and best, the function of the theater is different from that of the school and university.

The modern theater is a commercial enterprise, a business. It is responsible only to the box-office, and so the actor's fundamental concern is not with inner process, but with outer form regulated to theater requirements and restrictions.

*Educational Dramatics*, on the other hand, does not deal with the high art of acting,—that is, with disciplined, perfected form; it deals simply with natural re-acting. *Educational Dramatics* takes form as it comes, spontaneously and automatically,

if only it spring from an inner causative principle. The function of the dramatic instinct is to release activities of living which develop the player's character as does actual living.

If education is the development of character rather than the acquiring of facts, then the importance of dramatic activity as a "practice in living" cannot be questioned.

2. THE DRAMATIC INSTINCT—What is dramatic instinct? I know I am venturing upon debatable ground—that some psychologists deny the existence of the dramatic instinct, as thirty years ago others denied the existence of the subconscious mind—but I must ask you to accept this tentative definition for the present: The dramatic instinct is the grown-up play instinct; it is the universal urge to share, to communicate, to externalize. (3)

The significance of the dramatic instinct to the educator is that it exists in every one, and stimulates the individual to activity in every part of his being. Operating spontaneously, the dramatic instinct reduces the real life processes by which we re-act every day to the attack of environment with action and speech.

When something in our environment arrests our attention, we make:

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| I         | 1. Contact with the thing through the senses.                     |
| KNOWING   | 2. Investigation of it.   |
| (outside) | 3. Identification (a. of the thing<br>(b. of myself to the thing. |
| II        | 4. Readjustment—inner response—and recondition.                   |
| CARING    | 5. Generation of energy.  |
| (inside)  | 6. Output of impulse.   |
| III       | 7. Automatic outer response of the body (including voice)         |
| DOING     | in the activities of expression—aspect                            |
| (outside) | movement  |
|           | gesture   |
|           | vocalizing  |
|           | speech  |



*Educational Dramatics* deals only with spontaneous and automatic re-action. It is not acting, but re-acting. The art of acting instead concerns itself primarily with the end-product, but *Educational Dramatics* concerns itself with living impulse; it releases inner forces that are a new, cleansing, and ennobling experience to the player.

3. **EXPRESSION**—The dictionary defines expression as "art or product of pushing out," and it is in this sense that we use it.

Primarily, expression is relief—then communication. In so far as it is relief it is inarticulate and violent; in so far as it is communication it tends to narrow to speech, and to disciplined speech.

Expression is part and parcel of living; living cannot go on without expression. The attack of environment in real life calls forth a response from us and this is manifested in a continuous, spontaneous and automatic expression.

Shall we then define expression as "outside registering of inner living," or say that "expression is what you do about the way you feel"? It is all this, and more.

Normally, the coordination between the soul and the body in its expression is spontaneous and automatic, and the healthy human being is unconscious of the ways and means, the marvels of correlation of flesh, muscles and breath, by which the body responds to the wishes, orders and edicts of the soul.

Edmund Spenser wrote:

*For of the soul the body form doth take  
For soul is form and doth the body make.*

The body is our agent, our representative, our servant, and it carries out our orders, our wishes, our edicts automatically. It gives *expression* to the soul.

So our first step should be a study—an understanding—of our instrument of expression—our body. What are the outer processes whereby the body spontaneously and automatically adjusts itself in expression? What starts them, how do they

"work"? How do they connect with the inner processes? What is the body? How does it work? What makes it "go" as it does? What force puts it into activity for expression? Where and how is the force generated? All this the method of *Educational Dramatics* explains.

Speech, next, is so important that it may be considered as a special department of expression. Speech tells what you are. Speech represents you. Or does it misrepresent you? Speech exists to serve us. Can it be that our speech does not serve us, does not represent us? That perhaps it *misrepresents* us? Exercises are needed to help us command our speech so that it will more fully, more accurately and more truly represent us.

Speech is telling something we want to tell the way we want to tell it so that it will let the other fellow know, and make him care the way we care. Prose, poetry, dramatic text are our possession by the magic of printed speech, i.e., text. Into these mysteries the teacher initiates her students—after acquiring the art of speech herself—for you can give only what you have got!

Expression happens—we do not make it. By this I mean that the soul makes the decisions but the body merely reflects them outwardly as a mirror. In doing so it follows a basic three-fold sequence: a. knowing, b. caring, c. doing.

This is the *Life Sequence* chart as formulated by Emma Sheridan Fry. It has been tried and tested by Mrs. Fry's students and has proved as infallible as the multiplication table whenever and wherever applied.

As three-fourths of our daily activity is automatic, and as expression patterns tend to repeat themselves, it follows that practice in wisely-chosen body and speech responses should be valuable at least in the formation of good habits. It is more.

Whatever condition you choose inside gives automatic response outside. By expression, the body becomes the picture of

the soul and so conveys its message.

We know that established contacts tend to recur and we know also that inner condition commands outer form. So with our knowledge of the life process sequence, impulse energy may be directed into creative channels, making the mind and body responsive to constructive impulses—not indirectly, by storing the memory with edifying examples, but by personal experience, in life practice in the dramatic field.

*A Method so Old that it Sounds New*

Here then is a method, based on traditions, tested and proved, by which chosen impulses may be released, vivifying heart, mind and body—integrating maladjustments, releasing physical inhibitions and awakening dominant nobilities.

This is the method, I am convinced, that the early Church used to teach her unlettered children, through mysteries, moralities, pageants and the annual guild plays. Its aim is to train human beings for life, here and hereafter—not to develop craftsmen for the commercial theater.

*I believe* this method is old, not new. *I believe* it is the teaching method used by the Church before the Reformation. *I believe* this method was rediscovered and tested, and finally formulated in clear, practical terms by Mrs. Fry.

This conviction, arrived at after many years of experimental work and study, gives me the courage to claim and to proclaim that *I believe* this method is soundly based on Catholic theology, philosophy and psychology, and is fundamentally, radically and inherently different from modern educational theory and practice.

This is the first time I have made this claim, and I have found the courage to do it because I have found the principles and precepts of this method confirmed and substantiated in the writings of the greatest saints and doctors of the Church, and of modern religious and lay teachers,—St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Hilary, Father Leen, G. K. Chesterton, Eric Gill,

C. S. Lewis, Dorothy L. Sayers and others.

Before the Reformation, education was in the hands of the Church, and the Church recognized the trinity of being in man—mind, spirit, body—man made in the image of God, continually knowing, loving, doing. This was accepted as a basic fact; it was unquestioned. Modern education ignores this basic fact, considering man as only body and mind.

St. Augustine wrote that the image of the Trinity is made in man, that in this way man should be the image of the one true God. "He proceeds, in his great treatise (*On the Trinity*) to expound the doctrine, *analogically*, using again and again the appeal to experience. He says in effect: 'A trinitarian structure of being is not a thing incomprehensible or unfamiliar to you; you know of many such within the created universe. There is a trinity of sight, for example: the form seen, the act of vision, and the mental attention that correlates the two. These three, though separable in theory, are inseparably present whenever you use your sight. Again, every thought is an inseparable trinity of memory, understanding, and will. This is a fact of which you are quite aware. It is not the concept of a trinity-in-unity that presents any insuperable difficulty to the human imagination.'" (4)

Perhaps we find the trinitarian structure of man, and of his creative activities, mysterious because they are universal and, once realized and accepted, *obvious*.

Since the Reformation, this trinity of being has been ignored in education. Modern materialistic philosophy and psychology consider man as only body and mind—two-fold. From such a false premise even the most brilliant pundits can deduce only dangerous and unsound conclusions. Therefore, modern education tends to destroy minds and morals! Modern education divorces thinking and feeling from doing, though psychology tells us that we may not do that without danger, and it is an



accepted fact that, as C. S. Lewis says: inadequate outer expression chills inner process.

There is much talk today of the failure of modern education. It does not fit for living, its critics claim; it does not develop human beings harmoniously. Man *thinks, feels, acts*, and should develop along all three lines; but modern education seems to have concluded that when the intellect is trained, the whole personality is trained. Alas, it has forgotten the inevitable trinitarian *Life Process Sequence*. As a consequence, many people contrive never to think for themselves from the cradle to the grave.

The acquisition of knowledge is not the same thing as thinking; it is the first step towards it. Knowledge does not become thought until we have made it part of our lives by relating it to our experience and acting upon it.

"The human brain is a machine for coming to conclusions," G. K. Chesterton tells us. In the dramatic field we learn to think our knowledge into action by making decisions and acting upon them immediately.

As with thought, the test of emotion is, that if it is real it makes us, not passive, but active. Thought fused with emotion changes knowledge into energy at the command of the will. If we do not thus transmute it, all our knowledge becomes stale and stagnant and good for nothing; energy demands expression, that is, relief and communication.

The comparative fruitlessness of so much educational effort is mainly due to the neglect of feelings which are the proximate source of human energy, the real springs of educational progress whether in learning or in conduct. Where there is not only neglect but repression, the harm done may reach the dimension of a disaster. It is then plainly necessary that we should study with some care the rôle of feeling in the development of individuality.

The truth is that the whole subject of

emotion and its power in life and development of character and personality has been entirely overlooked. Man has ignored the primitive but dynamic forces of his nature.

In everything that is vital to the happiness and development of an individual or a people, emotion is inevitably bound up with thought.

Action is growth. Repression is not necessarily growth; it is not even correction. All that comes of the attempt to escape from our emotions is a weakening of the capacity to cope with our feelings, a fear of them. In the dramatic field, emotion may be directly, safely and constructively dealt with.

St. Thomas Aquinas said that active habits are strengthened by repetition, but passive ones are weakened. "The more often we feel without acting, the less we will be able to act, and the less, eventually we will be able to feel," says C. S. Lewis. And exterior acts strengthen the will and equalize the powers of the soul.

St. Hilary taught in his treatise *On the Trinity* that eternity is in the Father (idea), form is in the Son (energy and image), use is in the Holy Ghost (gift, power, message). (5)

Man is a three-fold unity of mind, soul, body, created to know, love, and serve God, and man's creative activities mysteriously repeat this inevitable three-fold sequence of knowing, caring, doing, which is the foundation and basis of our *Life-Process Sequence* of expression.

The process and sequence of adjustments by which the person responds to the attacks of environment is always the same for everyone and under every condition both in real life *and* in the dramatic field. This is not determinism, for at every step in the process freedom of choice is maintained for the will. Consider again the life-process chart on page 18.

#### *How to Apply the Method*

As teachers, you are to command this process to build character by stimulating

each one of your students to healthful aliveness of knowing and caring and doing.

Education, in any department, is merely the regulation of the process of expression that it may function freely, vigorously and completely. Assure yourself by experiment that the sequence proceeds as charted, whether the attack arises from actual environment, or from a proposed environment, such as that of your school play or "project." Experience will show you a thousand delicacies and discriminations. The stages of the expression process overlap; there are no sharp demarcations in nature. Activities intermingle. But the simple chart outlined above will encompass all adaptations. Do not hurry. Stages cannot be skipped or rushed. The reality and vigor of the life you are evoking are determined by the vigor and reality continuously projected from one stage to the next.

How to apply this method? Once it is understood, no teacher can help applying it, for it is the old forgotten way in which life is animated—as Duke Orsino says of the old song, "It is simple sooth."

You remember, of course, the first rule of story-telling: Use material that the child can immediately turn into doing. We know, feel and do, and this sequence must be established as early as possible in the dramatic field of "make-believe," by acted-out nursery rhymes, activity lilt, "let's pretend," later in plays.

In story-telling the child's imagination is awakened and directed, and for a while the child is content to "hear about" things, but soon—and in this, each child is a law unto himself—the dramatic imagination awakes and the child associates himself with the story, becomes a part of it. The wise teacher, the instructed teacher, encourages "acting out." From a mere passive spectator, the child becomes the field of the emotions—and associates himself *actively* with the working out of the story. He wants to *show*. This first awakening of

the dramatic imagination, if balked, may be the beginning of dangerous repressions. "Acting out is the safeguard that deals with the outward expression of created imagination, and away from the dangers of introspective fantasy." (Father Leen).

But the instructed teacher must help the children to differentiate between the life field and the dramatic field, so easily confused in the beginning. For example, a child pictures himself nobly killing a lion in the school yard. He therefore knows perfectly well he can. That he has not yet done so is a mere irrelevant detail. Has he not *seen himself* doing it? So he goes and tells about killing the lion. With gravity and precision, he supplies detail. And—as is the way with dramatic realities—the picture supplies detail on demand. The child is not lying—only confusing reality and make-believe. You see the need of educational regulation in the dramatic field.

We need instructed teachers in this method—teachers who recognize the necessity for training in expression, who understand the automatic response of the body to inner impulse in movement and speech, who are competent in the management of breath and voice, who have knowledge of instincts and emotions, and of the connection between knowing, feeling and doing—between perception, emotion, will and manifestation.

### *The Play*

The culmination of all school dramatic work is the class play—and, of course, it must be a creditable achievement; but, fundamentally, in any school anywhere, dramatic activity should be for character building, ennobling and healthful body release, and joyous adventure in life experience for the player.

What is a play? A play is a laboratory displaying the process of conscious living. Here with a good light and leisure we may observe human beings sustaining the impact of environment, readjusting inwardly and expressing these adjustments out-



wardly. We see life-forces—hate, love, desire, refusal—generated, loosed, hurling, crowding, coaxing and fooling human beings into responsive activities. Other laboratories display matters which some of us think to be of less interest, as plant growth, or chemical change, the ways of electrons, or the adventurings of microbes. It is well that we should learn about the pressure under which a gas liquefies—let us also search out that pressure under which a given human heart tends to yield.

A good play is a cross-section of human life in which we may study and practise living. It is all important to choose dramatic material that conforms to life logic and works out the problems of life in obedience to the high laws of justice and honor, with no dishonest juggling of the everlasting values of right and wrong and of our free will to choose one or the other.

The dramatic field is the laboratory for study and experiment in human life and the problems of human life. In the dramatic field, life unfolds to study and answers to analysis; its logic is self-evident, and stays put, for future reference. Miranda is forever herself as of the precious moment—freshly unfolding the processes of her loveliness—each time we come to her. She is spontaneous ever—yet in our reach ever. The problem entangling the heart of Viola works out its ways before us, as often as we choose to enter into it. Today Juliet's message reaches us from her moonlight balcony—tomorrow she summons when she cries to the priest to keep her, "an unstained wife, to her dear love."

In the dramatic field cause and effect are revealed in close relation. One may be traced to the other—one may be measured by the other.

In preparing the play, two-thirds of the time should be devoted to study of the problem, so as to develop in the players the impulses involved. If this is done, self-consciousness will be submerged in the flow of impulses which spring up as the

player relates *himself* to the problem. Speech and action in expression of these impulses can thus be unself-conscious, spontaneous and normal, because they result, not from voluntary control, but from the operation of those same laws which in real life associate impulse and action, and produce expression.

So in analysis of dramatic material, we lay bare character and thread out the logic of action. The player must love the character not because the character is good or bad, strong or weak, but because he is just as he is, and because his acts are the inevitable outcome of what he is. Christian love of neighbor implies that we must accept the neighbor *as he is*, as God loves him.

So each part must always be understood at the highest human level the text will carry. And text bound down to degraded expression should not be used.

Leontes is jealous, unjust, revengeful. We animate him by his wounded love, his conviction of injury, his suffering. Malvolio is a pompous fool—but he is convinced, he believes, and he suffers. The Queen, Gertrude, sins—but she also loves, and she is regal, and she trusts and she suffers. Claudius is a villain—but he loves, and he has brains, and is fearless, and he suffers, and is *sincere*. The element of sincerity, of conviction, is the touchstone, I think, for it is that which God sees in us with his forgiving love.

### *Conclusion*

Wisely directed dramatic activity becomes practice in living, and the playing of a part an emotional catharsis purging and relieving dangerous emotional pressures. In the action of induced dramatic living we find release from our repressions and maladjustments. And, *because of the law* governing habits and behavior, we bring over into our daily living the freedom and control acquired in the dramatic field.

Life practice according to *Educational*

*Dramatic* methods need not, indeed should not, lead to the professional stage any more than practice in the gymnasium leads to the circus tent, or horseback riding to the

race-track.

Let us discriminate then between the use of the drama in education and the use of it for entertainment in the theatre.

(1) See *Mysteries End* by Rev. Harold Gardiner, S.J.

(2) See "Children's Educational Theater" by Minnie A. Hertz, *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1947.

(3) Professor Von Munsterberg—brought from Germany and installed at Harvard—wrote: "There is no such thing as the subconscious mind . . ."

(4) Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Mind of the Maker*, p. 36

(5) cf. St. Thomas *Summa Theologica*, Q. I, 39, 8.

## PASSION AND PATIENCE TOILED AT CONGONHAS DO CAMPO

*By André Racz*

To the traveler walking through the streets of Rio de Janeiro, it is evident at once how rich the Brazilian capital is in the highest examples of coöperation between the lofty natural setting and the man-made architecture harmonizing with it, attaining the unity between Creation and man as an active agent of Creation.

This can be seen in abundant examples of XVIIIth century churches as well as in XXth century buildings. No matter how strict the style used in a given period, what is outstanding in Brazilian architecture is the imaginative way in which it adapts the tight conventions of such styles to its own specific native needs. Brazilian architects obeyed the given teachings of the schools only to liberate their creative energy. These poets knew well how to modify the rigidity and aridity of given formulas, adding to them the specific coloring of their own nature.

The vitality and dynamic quality, so consistently found in Brazilian architecture, is a testimony to the richly poetic soul of a people continuously deriving stimuli from their past traditions. Inventive forms of the present day drawn on past traditions are, however, the marks of a rebellious individuality struggling to liberate itself

from the oppressive nature of a static tradition. This struggle itself proves to be a stimulating spiritual activity which fully accepts the challenge of the past. It is obvious that the truly valid forms established in space not only endure time but have the ability to serve as carriers of the seeds that will germinate in the soul of future generations. In this aspect, art coincides completely with life, inasmuch as it has the power to renew itself in a continuous sense of fluidity and movement, obeying its principles only to liberate its own creative impulses. In contrast to this, the "school," the "academy," cut away from direct touch with life, separated from the life-giving fountain of experience by heaps of formulated recipes, degenerates into the cold vacuum of death.

Art is, by the essence of its nature, spiritual. It is form; it is spirit. When the creative energy of man's soul overflows, the matter he is shaping becomes form. The matter becomes alive. Our heart senses through its beats the rhythm of which its own beats are only a part. So all creative activity is intimately bound to the Creator.

Today, when much of "modernistic" architecture, lacking imagination, betrays a frigidity and spiritual poverty, we are doubly interested in a deeper study of the

Photographs for Figs 1, 9, 10 are reproduced by courtesy of G. E. Kidder Smith; the others by courtesy of A. Costa.





The Plaza  
fig. 1



fig. 2



fig. 3—Daniel



fig. 4—The gate: Isaias a



fig. 6—From the Terrace



fig. 7—Facing the mount





fig. 5—Ezechiel



fig. 8—Jonas



fig. 9—Isaias, detail



fig. 10—Jonas



fig. 11—Isaias



fig. 12—Daniel



origins of Brazil's XXth century architecture, which displays that richness of invention, variety, and individuality of the native forms evolved through the colonial epochs, while adhering to the functionalism of contemporary architecture. This equilibrium, achieved through the affirmation of a past rather than its negation, proves to be fruitful today and leads to the fertile soil of the tradition of earlier Brazilian architecture.

Some of the finest young Brazilian architects are drawn antagonistically into camps opposing God, motivated by immediate political issues that confront this suffering contemporary world, although their creative genius is deeply stimulated and inspired by the religious architecture of former times. So clearly sounds the voice of Gabriela Mistral, in her decalog of the artist: "There is no atheist art. Though you do not love the Creator, you will affirm him in creating to his likeness." (*Desolacion*)

It is regrettable that in a throbbing commercial city like Rio de Janeiro the devouring tendency of recent times sweeps away all these lovely monuments in its drive to gain more money. New apartment houses, blocking the vistas of beautifully placed churches and monuments, seem to become all gold mines for their greedy investors. This alone has been the motivating force that has violently changed the face of the capital in these recent times. In the eleventh hour, before the last vestiges and remnants of these historical ages were to fall prey to the demolition squads, a federal agency came into being (*Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional*) forbidding their further annihilation and keeping them in existence as national monuments subject to federal protection. These measures have proven beneficial not only to Brazil but to the entire world in safeguarding one of the deepest fountains of a rich architectural heritage.

From the capital, where the structure of

huge advertisements is permitted to outgrow not only tall palm trees but to raise itself above the steeples of lovely churches as well, I longed to see the Province of Minas Gerais where the true spirit of Brazil slumbers but is still green and alive.

Once an important mining province, whence it derived its name, it is the flourishing seat of a great culture, with towns and cities strewn on lovely hills and slopes. Its churches and buildings are a testimony to men who lived and worked under the sun, amidst a beautiful nature, seeking to build their churches with that profound respect for the Creator from which all instinct and aesthetic judgment springs. This art is the testimony of a life full of spirit, and the vitality of it still impresses and fascinates us today more than ever, when we are ever harder pressed by a civilization based on the monotony of numerical repetition trying to squeeze out every day the remaining individuality that springs from the heartbeat of the person, and the spirit of the soul.

It was early morning when I arrived at Congonhas do Campo. The air was fresh and unspoiled, the horizon enclosed all around with great curving green hills. Only the graceful palm trees towering over the little houses gave any indication that we were in the tropics. Arriving at the small railroad station, one could feel the air of mystery over-hanging the sleepy town. It was the mystery of a purpose. These people were all parts of a living monument. Generations that followed one another quietly continued to be a part of the same monument, a monument alive. The Spirit dwells among them. They go about their daily chores, simply, every day, for generations. The cobbled streets were noisy under the hoofs of mules and horses that heavily outnumbered the trucks.

Somehow, all the streets in this town lead upwards, upwards to hills. And on each hill stands a beautiful church, projecting its towers against a serene blue sky.

As I started uphill that early morning, my eyes fell on a church towering over the whole town on the highest hill.

Unguided, a stranger in this town, without inquiring, I started towards this point that through a strangely magnetic power attracted me upwards. It all looked like the vision of the City of God. When I reached the summit I soon realized that nothing of this site was accidental; the rich view offered to the spectator was all a part of the vision of a great architect whose creative personality left an indelible seal on the entire surrounding landscape.

Here at the feet of the "Santuário do Senhor Bom Jesus de Matozinhos" below the walls of rising terraces that support twelve towering soapstone statues of the Prophets, I felt the impact of the rebellious personality of a great artist. Out of the decadence of an impersonal baroque of his own time, fired by burning passion and endless patience, the crippled master, *O Aleijadinho*, broke forth to freedom, to the eternalization of his suffering spirit, in these carved stone figures. The tortured and at the same time rhythmical simplicity, the expressive musicality of his sculptures tell us much of the life of this master.

*O Aleijabindo* ("the little cripple," in Portuguese) was born in 1730 at Ouro Preto, then called Vila Rica. He was the natural son of a Portuguese architect and a Negro slave woman. As a child and later a promising youth, he helped his father in his work, and soon became known in the entire region as an architect and sculptor of great ability. This was the time when a prosperous province began to dedicate richly ornate churches to the glory of God. In a great many cities of this province he left some of the finest monuments of religious architecture and, pampered by fate, he soon achieved fame and well-being, leading a life full of activity and pleasure. At the age of forty-seven, as if he had been struck by lightning, the black shadow of disease fell on him, a disease which caused

him intolerable sufferings for the remaining thirty-seven years of his life.

Antonio Francisco Lisboa then became *O Aleijadinho*. His feet and hands twisted and paralyzed, his face disfigured and his mouth toothless, he was such a frightening apparition that he shunned the world and withdrew into the world of his own creation. Unable to walk, the crippled master was carried on the shoulders of his servants day after day, up those same cobbled paths to the church, the Sanctuary of the Good Jesus of Matozinhos. His spirit victorious over the pains of the flesh, he carved the anguish of his soul into stone with tools ingeniously fastened to his maimed hands. Hiding his ravaged face and his distorted appearance from men, he went to work at dawn, returning only after sunset to rest his exhausted body after toiling all day. In intense pain, isolated from men, in tragic solitude, he created these beautiful statues.

Walking through the flowering garden of the *Via Crucis*, uphill, I came to a little cobble-paved plaza, where two tall palm trees loom in front of a small iron gate leading through several terraces of ever-rising walls—with each cornerstone supporting the statue of a prophet—to a platform in front of the church itself, standing in majestic serenity with its white walls and towers, inlaid sandstone bars and pillars, and blue portal and woodwork.

The huge figures of the twelve Prophets: Isaias, Jeremias, Baruch, Ezechiél, Daniel, Osee, Jonas, Amos, Micheas, Joel, Nahum and Habacuc thundering the voice of the Old Testament, these prophets of Judaism cry out in the wilderness, into the darkness of history, bringing the hope of the Saviour to the world. These fiery and wise figures guide us under their raised arms, step by step, to the towering Body of Christ, the church in front of which they are standing guard. "For all the Prophets and the law prophesied until John." (St. Matthew: 11, 13)



To some people who expect from art a photographic likeness or the cold imitation of natural appearances, these statues might seem faulty anatomically, grotesque. Their heavy hands and unnatural proportions might be disturbing. Yet the emotional intensity with which they are so imbued is caused by the very fact that they are expressive through a plastic realism that has very little or nothing to do with naturalistic representation.

These forms, alive in space, are made eloquent through the symphonic quality of all the architecture of which they are only elements. Their curving lines and sinuous profiles are rhythmical, and it is this plasticity that makes them as expressive in space as, say, a chorale of Handel's *Messiah* is in time. "The people that sat in darkness hath seen great light." It is this abstract quality that all plastic art must have to possess significant form, that lends vitality and life itself to these moving statues of the crippled master. Today it is inspiring to think of the *Aleijadinho*, whose spirit struggled against the adversity of physical sufferings and whose mysticism could transform the silent stones into vibrant figures of the Prophets still thundering today against the corruption of the world and bringing the hope of salvation to a suffering mankind.

When visiting the town of Ouro Preto, where the *Aleijadinho* was born, in one of the local museums I saw the full-sized replica, carved in soapstone, of the so gracefully erect figure of the prophet Daniel. Viewing this copy, now stripped of its essential connections, without the architecture originally surrounding it, I felt deeply the tragedy of our times, when beautifully-carved statues are removed from churches only to be displayed in galleries and museums. The same figure of Daniel which so nobly stands in its own place where its creator placed it, and where it projects its profile in interrelated harmony to all the other architectural elements, here lost its

life entirely. Displayed in this gallery, imprisoned, rather, it has become a sadly displaced figure. Standing there in the museum in front of the "imprisoned" Daniel, with deep nostalgia, I understood the true significance and scope of all great religious art of previous times—an art where every detail was organized as part of a living Liturgy and culture, and not the manufacture of objects to be displayed in museums, or sold in galleries.

Out there, where the artist placed them in the open space under the sky, the statues could breathe, and fully live their true life.

One early morning, standing beneath the Prophets of the Santuario, I saw a small group of people starting uphill, winding their way slowly up to the church. A few bare-footed, poorly-clad men, with their heads uncovered, carrying a tiny coffin, some tiny body resting in it, bringing him up to the Mother, with their pain-stricken faces, to give the last rites to a little person who only few months before started out on his way in life from the baptistry of this same Mother. "All things to one place; of earth they were made, and into earth they return together." (*Eccl.* 3, 20) These calmly moving people, terribly poor but stepping with noble serenity the cycle of their earthly lives in faith, gave a sense of deep humanity to the entire landscape. The hills murmured, joining their painful expressions, the wind carried the sound to the top of the hill, to the church, where I was standing, and now those statues of the *Aleijadinho*, hovering around me, became suddenly more significant than ever. In their passionate gestures, frozen into stone, they came to life and echoed the murmuring sounds of the hills, thundering: "I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking on the ground as servants." (*Eccl.* 10, 7)

Lasting in time, they gave concrete form to all I felt at that moment—far from galleries and museums.

# THE CLERGY AND THE CARPENTER

*An artist's plea for understanding from priests and theologians who, we all reasonably recognize, are handicapped in judging the problems of the craftsman. The present article by Philip Hagreen is an attempt to mitigate the handicap.*

*By Philip Hagreen*

It is the nature and duty of man to work. He who does not work is disobeying God's law and is a parasite on other men. In spite of the fall, and the long decline from Paradise to Pimlico, there are few men who do not want to work, in one way or another. Of this essential activity of man the clergy say little.

This excuse may be made for the clergy: that their work as priests has not changed since the time of our Lord. Their raw material, the human soul, remains the same. Their tools are still the Liturgy, the sacraments, and teaching. Thus they do not realise their unique immunity from the disaster that has crippled the lives of other men. To follow the example of our Lord as priest is still possible. But for a layman to follow the example of our Lord as carpenter is now forbidden.

We are told that by working as a carpenter our Lord set us an example of humility and patience; that he chose a laborious trade and endured its drudgery. We hear of a menial occupation in a provincial village and of the tedium of knocking in nails.

That he who made the oak tree by his Word alone should therefrom have made a table by the labor of his hands was indeed an example of humility and patience. We would suggest that it was also an example of how tables should be made.

Let us think for ourselves what manner of work may have been done in the carpenter's shop in Nazareth. We shall find that the things made there had a reasonable purpose and that conditions favored

the right making of them. In other words, the things were works of art. They could fail to be perfect works of art only through the imperfection of the carpenter. The things made by our Lord were therefore perfect works of art—the only perfect works of art that the world has seen.

There are more points about St. Joseph's work. What, for instance, was the range of it? Did it include what we should now call wheelwright's work and cooper's work? Were the things made mostly agricultural gear such as ploughs, harrows, and ox-yokes; or household furniture and utensils? Was the carpenter's shop also a smithy, and, if so, were nails, hinges, etc., made of iron or bronze? Of other points, and these the essentials of right making, we can be certain.

Firstly, the things made were for reasonable and good purposes. They supplied the normal needs of the neighborhood. St. Joseph dealt directly with his customers, who could discuss their requirements with him. If he were asked to make a bad thing, he could refuse. In other words, the *final cause* of each thing was good and was clearly known to its maker.

Secondly, the raw material—the wood—was local. Trees were felled by St. Joseph, or under his supervision, and their barking, cleaving, and stacking were his concern. It is not the nature of woodwork to have only plane surfaces. A straight-grained piece may be set aside for a tabletop, while pieces of suitable curve are selected for ploughs, etc. The saw was mainly used across the grain, where it cuts sweetly. Along the grain, the tree was opened with wedges. This is a delightful



process, leaving the full strength of the wood and revealing its full beauty. Such wood will not warp, and for many purposes it may be used at once and allowed to season at its leisure. St. Joseph was free to choose the most suitable wood for each part of a job. Thus the *material cause* of the work was good.

Thirdly, St. Joseph's bench and tools were his own, probably because he had made them. He was free to replace them or alter and adapt them to his needs. They fitted their user, being of the right weight and proportions for his stature and strength. Thus the *efficient cause* of the work was good.

Fourthly, there remains the *formal cause*, the practical intelligence of the carpenter. In St. Joseph's case this was certainly good. In our Lord's case it was perfect.

When a member of the clergy tells us that our Lord chose the dull work of a common carpenter rather than the more interesting work of a cabinet-maker, the poor man is talking through his biretta. It is hard nowadays to make anyone understand what was meant by craftsmanship, because so few have ever seen any. The only skill people can appreciate now is in games. Well then, the specialised precision of the cabinet-maker may be likened to billiard-playing. The all-round wood-worker, swinging axe or adze, slicing with the draw-knife and dealing with incalculable curves, may be likened rather to the cricketer, who must be able to bowl and bat and catch and run. His work depends on decisions in the air, on movements too subtle for measurement and too swift for conscious calculation. It shows a right instinct in the average Englishman that he respects the billiard champion but that he feels something of hero-worship towards the great cricketer.

A learned priest tells us that the curse of Adam seems to have worked itself out, since machinery has removed the drudgery

from work. We wonder how the clergy would like it if *their* work were mechanized, modernized, rationalized. If the subdivision of labor allotted to each priest not even one recognisable word of the Mass but only one meaningless syllable which he was compelled to repeat, as fast as he could stutter it, all day long and all the year round.

If a carpenter does bad work, the clergy think it no libel to say that he is a bad carpenter. Yet, if we speak of a bad priest, they think we are accusing him of unchastity, for it does not occur to them that he might be one who does a priest's work badly.

The words used about making are worthy of meditation. For instance, we admit the merit of a thing that is *hand-made*. But the hand is used in mechanized production. The hand is all that is used. We therefore call such production manufacture and speak of the employees as hands. The merit of the hand-made thing is that it is made by *man*. The craftsman uses his memories of tradition and of experience. He uses his understanding to apply these to the job in hand, and he uses his will to do the job as well as he can in the best way he can think of. Thus his hand is directed by the three powers of his soul and the thing is made by the whole man. So naturally do we think of the hand as the executive of the soul that we speak of acts of the Divine Will as the work of God's hand. Note that a steam-ship carries so many hands. A sailing-ship carried so many souls.

All that exists is made by God, directly or indirectly. The daisy praises God because it is as he made it. It lives and grows and multiplies and withers in perfect conformity to his will. The bird, acting by the instinct that God gives it, builds a nest. That nest is part of God's creation and he sees that it is good. The carpenter makes a table, but the carpenter is prone to evil. He may work carelessly through sloth. He

may work too hastily through avarice. He may be too meticulous through pride of craftsmanship and through being wrongly ashamed of his human limitations. He may try to give his work a perfection that belongs only to things made directly by God. A cruder kind of pride may lead him to make the table, not the best way, but in a way that will show his skill or his originality.

By the virtue of art, these temptations are avoided. The carpenter may make a table to the best of his ability. It will be a perfect table—not perfect in the sense in which a daisy is perfect, but perfect in its suitability, its appropriateness. Compared with a daisy, the best table is a clumsy botch, for human skill is infinitely below that of its Creator. Yet the table is good through the good will of its maker, through the right use of his faculties. It takes its place without disharmony with God's world, and because it is a product of man's free will, the table is more pleasing to God than all the daisies that ever bloomed.

It is good for us to be reminded of the dignity of man. But this dignity demands more than security of employment, a family wage, a bathroom and suitable sanitation.

"As Christians we ought not to tolerate any attack, direct or indirect, on the dignity of man or on the sanctity of family life," say our Bishops. Very well then. But we say that the dignity of man is attacked, nay, outraged, when he is compelled to spend his whole working life in sub-human, mechanical acts. We say that the sanctity of family life is violated when the husband is kept from home, virtually in prison, all his working days, when he cannot own either his means of livelihood or his home, when his children are taken from him by strangers. Of these things our spiritual leaders say hardly a word.

Apart from the very few priests who see that the industrial system is evil in its origins and in its effects and that no adjust-

ment of it can make it compatible with Catholicism, the clergy are of two types.

The majority shirk the problem. They say that it is a matter of economics. That it would be too costly to make things by hand nowadays. That it would lower the standard of living. That we are not going to write with quill pens when we can have typewriters, and that, anyhow, the Church has never condemned slavery.

The others admit the evil of industrialism, but advocate surrender to it—for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. This group includes men of learning and renown whose reputation gives them great influence. Though they admit that there are many evils connected with industrialism, they defend machinery as though its goodness were the central dogma of their faith. It would be easier to argue with them if we could discover their motive. At any mention of the evils of mechanization, they interrupt with "But you cannot say that machinery is evil in itself." Why are they thus roused? If a man is drowning, do they shout: "But you cannot say that water is evil in itself," or do they try to save him?

They also say that our idea of work is a false one. They tell us that our Lord did not come on earth to enjoy making good woodwork, but to suffer and to teach us to suffer. They say that our Lord showed us something infinitely higher than craftsmanship when his hands no longer held chisel and mallet but were nailed to the cross. Industrialism, they say, offers wonderful opportunities for mortifying our instincts. The acceptance of the tedium of its methods and the ugliness of its products may be means of sanctification, and this is what the workers should be taught. Truly, every man has his cross—but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed.

If the work is mechanical, these members of the clergy argue, so much the better, as it leaves the mind free for higher things. Mechanical work permits no use of the



intellect or the will, for the actions are dictated and timed by the machine. But neither does it permit freedom of the mind. It exacts continuous attention. The punishment for a moment's inattention, hesitation or delay may be the loss of a finger or an eye, or a smash-up of machinery and an accusation of sabotage. It is only because they can give this attention that human beings are used. Whatever can be done automatically is done by machines.

In their effort to belittle the evils of industrialism, the clergy remind us that man is soul and body and that it is the soul that matters. Many speak of the soul as the rider of an unruly horse and they seem to think that if the horse is lamed it will be better for the rider. But man is not two things, like rider and horse; he is soul-body, a centaur.

The doctrine of the Incarnation and of the Resurrection teach us that in this life and in eternity man is one thing, a being which God has created and into which he has breathed the breath of life. Man is not like a knife—a steel blade set in a bone handle. He is a compound, like water. Water can be temporarily separated by electrolysis into oxygen and hydrogen. So can man be temporarily separated by electrocution into soul and body.

Now if we consider the duties of man on earth and his state in eternity, we must think of him as a compound, just as we must think of water as a compound when we are studying hydraulics. Oxygen and hydrogen are no concern of the hydraulic engineer. His science depends on the incompressibility of water. It is irrelevant to him that oxygen and hydrogen are compressible. The state of man's separated soul is a mystery, for it is an incomplete substance. This is of interest to speculative theologians. The state of man's separated body is of interest to worms.

We are told that it is not economical to make things by hand. Well, let us consider the economy of such a workshop as St.

Joseph's. Nothing of the material was wasted. The crooked and knotty parts of a tree were as valuable for some purposes as the straight-grained parts were for others. The bark was used by the tanner. Then it was litter and then manure. Twigs and any rotten wood were used as fuel, along with all the chips and shavings. The ash was used for washing and for the garden.

No time nor energy was wasted. The carpenter could order his work to suit the rhythm of his vitality. On a frosty morning he might swing axe or adze, or cleave a log with beetle and wedge. On a sultry afternoon he might sit to use the draw-knife or sharpen a saw. He could think out his problems when his mind was alert, and when it was dull he could go on with jobs that are done largely by habit. He could work in his garden when the garden needed it, or when he needed a change.

Further, no ability was wasted. There was no limit to the development of the carpenter's powers. A wooden spoon made by a man of genius surpasses ordinary spoons as a Stradivarius surpasses ordinary violins.

And what of the customer? He got what he wanted and paid only for what he got. He got a yoke that suited his breed of oxen, a harrow that suited his soil, and a chair that suited his figure. The things were made to fill his needs and able to suit his means. A piece of furniture might be the cheapest that would function or it might be a highly-wrought heirloom—a joy for centuries. Most hand-made things may be repaired by their maker. They may come back to him again and again as wear or accident make it necessary. Thus he learns their weak places and devises improvements. An important point in the economy of such neighborly dealings is that payment may often be made in kind.

Now, how does this compare with the industrial methods that we are told are economical? The tree grows in some far country, perhaps on the other side of the

world. Only what can be sawn into straight planks is shipped. Curved pieces would take up too much room. Instead of being seasoned and cloven, the wood is cut regardless of anything but the number of cubic feet that can be sold. Such wood is unfit for any decent work. The grain has not been followed and it will warp indefinitely. The carpenter receives it with all its best qualities destroyed. It may be full of sap or it may have been artificially seasoned—processed—so that it is as weak and characterless as cardboard. The material is wasted and there is all the waste of transport by sea and land. When the wretched wood reaches the workshop or the factory, the carpenter may not use his wits to make the best of it. He must work to tracings made in architects' offices. Fads and fancies, or travesties of antique manners, are expressed in such terms of solid geometry as can be drawn with T-square, etc.

Thus is the *man* wasted. A man is said to be employed in the saw-mill, in the transport trade, in the design office or in the factory. Yet nowhere is the *man* employed. What is employed is the economic pressure that forces the man to perform sub-human work.

Now that finance reaps interest not only from factory production but from every kind of trade and traffic, the worker has acquired a certain value as a consumer. He has purchasing power. His wages can be sucked in again by the creators of credit. He is encouraged to raise his standard of living, which means his expenditure on rent and luxuries. It is made almost impossible for him to bring up a family or acquire permanent property. By every means he is induced to waste his wages on perishable goods, on mechanical amusement, and on prefabricated emotion.

Why is such a system said to be economical? Because it pays dividends to investment; because it pays interest to credit. It is essential to mechanized industrialism

that as few as possible should be employed and that their tasks should be, as far as possible, fool-proof. It is said that the workers should be contented—which means that they should be submissive. A business is considered economical if it makes profits. Its object and its test is the prosperity of parasites. If this is economy—to hell with it!

No craftsman today has the fullness of control and freedom of method that existed in St. Joseph's shop. The carpenter who starts with squared wood and machine-made nails has been robbed of three-quarters of his craft. No one today knows the joy of joining wood that he has shaped from the tree, with nails that he has forged. To drive and clinch those nails gave a satisfaction that we cannot experience. The memory of it remains in our language, for the rhetorician still hits the nail on the head and clinches an argument.

There was a time in the Middle Ages when the use of glue in a joint was forbidden because the need for glue proved that a joint had not been rightly made. Now we have men classified as cabinet-makers who cannot make a dove-tail joint. Their job is to glue joints that have been cut out by machinery.

Thus has the carpenter become degraded. But how many can now spend their lives in even the most debased forms of woodworking? Very few, because wood has been ousted by materials that can be shaped entirely by machinery. Metals and plastics can be stamped and moulded without human skill. The many parts of an elaborate thing can each be mass-produced and they can be assembled by a row of slaves, each of whom repeats mechanically an allotted action. Behind him, or her, hover the "motion study expert" and the "industrial psychologist" to check any movement that is not the shortest. The production-belt is speeded up to the breaking-point of human nerves. Shattering vibration, maddening noise and nauseating smells often add to



the strain of the merciless speed. Hysteria may lead to the missing of a movement or even to sabotage, so those who are going crazy are discharged as unsuitable, or as suffering from "occupational neurosis," and are replaced from the great reservoir called Labor.

Industrial employment is not work, but

privation. It is the crucifixion of man's nature as maker. Those who betray him to it show their love for him in the kiss of Judas. Seeing Christ in our neighbor we see him unjustly condemned. Like Pilate, we seek to release him. Most of the clergy—also like Pilate—wash their hands of the business.



## PROS AND CONS OF BYZANTINE ART

### *Sacred Fortress*

#### *Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna*

OTTO G. VON SIMSON

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1948, 150 pages, 48 plates, \$10.00

Some years ago, at a regional meeting of the C.A.A., a lively discussion developed on the merits and demerits of Byzantine art as Christian art. One school of thought held that Byzantine art could not be considered as a genuine expression of Christian spirit, because it depended too much on pagan, mostly Persian, models, and was too much influenced by the Court, so that the simplicity and spontaneity of the Gospels had been lost to the pomp and circumstance of rigid ceremonial. The other school of thought defended Byzantine art by stating that it had to be understood as a manifestation of the theological and liturgical spirit of the Church which, after the Constantinian Peace, had conquered the public and political life of the Roman Empire. Because the issue is of great importance for a revival and re-orientation of Catholic art in our days, we are very grateful to Mr. von Simson for having given us a study which analyzes three outstanding monuments of Byzantine art—the mosaics of San Vitale, Sant' Apollinare in Classe, and

Sant' Apollinare Nuovo—on the background of contemporary theology and liturgy.

In the first chapter of his book, Mr. von Simson describes the scene and the main actors in the political and spiritual drama which is reflected in the mosaics of Ravenna. In 540, the Gothic rule ended in Ravenna with the triumphant entry of the Byzantine general Belisarius into the city which the emperor Justinian had selected as the imperial capital on Italian soil. In the years that followed, Ravenna remained an embattled fortress, surrounded by Gothic might and barely held by the Byzantine army. In this critical time, Justinian appointed Maximian, a native of Pola in Istria, as bishop of Ravenna. Maximian must have been a man of great political genius, for in a short time he overcame the opposition of the people and the clergy of Ravenna and immediately rushed a magnificent building-program to its completion—thus making Ravenna not only a military but also a spiritual stronghold of Byzantium in the West. In 548, only two years after Maximian's appointment as bishop, the church of San Vitale was solemnly consecrated. In the third year of his episcopate, Maximian completed the construction and decoration of Sant' Apolli-

nare in Classe, which had been begun under the Gothic king Theodoric. The mosaics of San Vitale plead the cause of the emperor, those of Sant' Apollinare that of the bishop of Ravenna in his struggle with Rome for spiritual supremacy in Italy.

In order to understand the vision unfolded before us in these mosaics, we must look at them with the eyes of a Byzantine of the VIth century. Justinian's greatest enemies were the Goths and other Germanic tribes which had taken possession of practically the entire western half of the Empire. His war against them took on the character of a crusade, because they were Arians. The heresy of Arius sought to strip Christ of his divinity. It was a rationalized and humanized form of Christianity, which was condemned by the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325) and provoked a strong reaction in the Christian East where piety was more and more impregnated by the experience of the awesome majesty of God.

While the basic tendencies of Arianism were continued in the teaching of Nestorius that Christ was a human person, the opposite emphasis on the divine element in Christ led to the heresy of Monophysitism, which asserted that the human nature of Christ was completely absorbed by the divine. This doctrine at first found favor and support at the imperial court, but later was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon (451) which accepted the formula expounded by Leo the Great in his famous Dogmatic Letter to Bishop Flavian of Constantinople: the two natures of Christ, the human and the divine, are united, unmixed and inconfused, in the one divine person of the Son of God. Monophysitism, however, was not dead. It had deep roots in the general spiritual attitude of the East which was always inclined to extol the divine majesty at the expense of the human initiative and freedom so dear to the West.

It is very likely that Justinian suspected the Western hierarchy of Arian leanings,

and that his famous condemnation of the *Three Chapters* was a part of his crusade against Gothic-Arian influence in the Latin half of his Empire. The *Three Chapters* were the writings of three Eastern bishops, Ibas of Edessa, Theodore of Mopsuesta, and Theodoretus of Cyrus. All three had been suspected of Nestorian leanings, but had been formally cleared of the charge of herodoxy by the Council of Chalcedon. Justinian's step, therefore, appeared to be an attack on Chalcedon in favor of the Monophysites. The entire hierarchy of the West opposed Justinian's condemnation. Pope Vigilius was spirited away from Rome and brought to Byzantium in 547, virtually a captive of the emperor. The Metropolitan of Milan was also in Constantinople. Maximian thus became in fact the Primate of Italy, and Ravenna the stronghold of Justinian's political and spiritual strategy.

Seen on this background, the mosaics of Ravenna reveal their true meaning. Neither in San Vitale nor in Sant' Apollinare in Classe do we find any representation of the Passion of Christ. The apse of San Vitale shows Christ at his Second Coming as the "Emperor of emperors." On the side walls of the sanctuary, to the right of Christ, we see Justinian in the act of offering the golden paten containing the eucharistic bread, while on the left his wife Theodora is represented as entering the church with the golden chalice in which the wine was offered at the altar. The bays on either side of the altar show sacrificial scenes from the Old Testament; on the left the three angels appearing to Abraham in the valley of Mambre, and Isaac whom his father is about to sacrifice; on the right Abel offering a lamb, and Melchizedek, with his sacrifice of bread and wine. All these scenes illustrate the eucharistic sacrifice which takes place on the altar. Abel, Abraham, and Melchizedek are specifically mentioned in one of the prayers of the Roman Canon as the three mystical anti-



types of Christ's priesthood.

Mr. von Simson calls our attention to the fact that in the Byzantine liturgy the Offertory had become an imperial prerogative to express the function of the emperor as leading his people—in fact, all Christian humanity—in the great offertory-procession in which the citizens of the City of God join "all the blessed immortals . . . in sacrificing themselves to the adoration of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." (Augustine, *City of God*, X, 6 and 25) Abel, Abraham, and Melchizedek appeared then, above all, as images of the emperor. This is true especially of Melchizedek who, as king of Salem and priest of the Most High, embodied to the people of the VIth century the awe-inspiring dignity of the Christian emperor. In San Vitale he wears the attire of a priest, but his headgear, cloak, and shoes are of the purple color which court ceremonial reserved for the emperor alone. (p. 31) Mr. von Simson shows that the figure of Moses, who in San Vitale appears as shepherd and law-giver, has an equal significance. At the Byzantine court the staff of Moses was carried before the sovereign. The shepherd Moses is not only a figure of Christ, but alludes also to the emperor. The same is true of Moses as the law-giver. The Byzantine monarchy was built around the concept of the emperor's prophetic mission. (p. 33)

While the mosaics of San Vitale celebrate the function of the emperor as king and as priest who represents on earth the divine majesty of the gloriously reigning Christ, the apse of Sant' Apollinare in Classe shows the dignity of the bishop of Ravenna as Primate of Italy in the light of Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. Christ's second coming in power and majesty is the supreme manifestation of his dignity as "Emperor of emperors." His Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, as preparation of his death, reveals his priestly mission. His witnesses at this event are the

three Apostles—one is tempted to say: Metropolitans.

The mosaic of Sant' Apollinare emphasizes this aspect of the Transfiguration by replacing the figure of Christ by that of the cross, studded with gems and pearls and placed in a large nimbus, which sets it off from a dark blue background sparkling with ninety-nine stars. The cross is flanked by the figures of Moses and Elias, while the hand of God reaches down from the clouds above. In the lower zone of the mosaic we perceive a pasture planted with trees. In the foreground and in the center of this pasture St. Apollinaris, the first bishop and martyr of Ravenna, is represented. Tunic, chasuble and pallium characterize him as Metropolitan. On either side, between herbs and white flowers, six lambs are seen proceeding toward the saint. Three lambs which symbolize the Apostles Peter, James, and John connect the upper part of the composition with the lower one which centers in the figure of St. Apollinaris.

The relation of this figure to the whole mosaic has always been a mystery, especially because scholars have based their analysis too much on aesthetic or artistic grounds. Mr. von Simson bases his explanation on a broad and comprehensive study of contemporary liturgy and theology which is indeed the only way to reach satisfactory conclusions. Far from being a later addition, as many archeologists have thought, the figure of St. Apollinaris is the key to the whole picture. It represents the saint as martyr and bishop. There is a close relation between *martyrium* and *mysterium*, between the actual martyrdom and the liturgical celebration of the sacrifice of Christ. Both are "imitations" of Christ, the latter sacramentally, the former actually. Both are a transfiguration into the divine glory of Christ, into which we enter only through the cross. To early Christianity the cross was not an instrument of torture but the sign of triumph,

as St. Leo has expressed it in a classical way in his sermons on the Passion and on the Transfiguration of Christ.

The mosaic of Sant' Apollinare in Classe conveys even to the modern beholder the full meaning of "sacred art." It is not only a "picture" or imagery but an invocation evoking a holy presence. (p. 58)

In the liturgical drama for which the composition serves as the setting and to which its imagery alludes, the transfigured martyr was mysteriously present. Every Mass celebrated in his basilica renewed his martyrdom and transfiguration. With him the entire congregation, the Church of Ravenna, partook of the mystery, and by this participation the cause of Ravenna was anchored in the eternal reality. The Christ-like dignity of the bishop and martyr was in a sense renewed in every one of his successors on the episcopal throne of Ravenna.

And for the time-concept of the liturgical drama, which merged present and past, the martyr, whose passion and resurrection were recalled in the Christian cult assumed imperceptibly the features of the man who, in the same pontifical robes, enacted the sacred rite. The frail ascetical figure in the apse of San Vitale portrays Maximian the man; but the martyr in Classe, transfigured under the mighty sceptre of the cross, extols his ecclesiastical dignity and the exalted authority as Metropolitan which he claimed. (p. 58)

The difference between San Vitale as the church of the imperial court, and Sant' Apollinare as the Cathedral of the archbishop is evident, and is confirmed by the rest of the mosaics in the apse, which are partly of a much later date. The space below the Transfiguration mosaic and between the windows of the apse is occupied by portraits of the four bishops of Ravenna. Two of them, St. Severus and St. Ursus, are commemorated as saints; two, Ecclesius and Ursicinus, as donors: the first initiated the program of ecclesiastical architecture under Justinian; the second founded Sant'

Apollinare in Classe. These four images fulfil the function of liturgical diptychs through which these "fathers" of the Church of Ravenna are continuously commemorated in the liturgical sacrifice enacted upon the altar.

Flanking the four "visual diptychs" are two representations, one depicting the sacrifice of Abel, Melchizedek, and Abraham, the other showing a donation in which the emperor Constantine IV Pogonatus, with his two sons, hands a scroll inscribed "*privilegia*" to Reparatus, archbishop of Ravenna, and successor to Maurus who stands between him and the emperor. Undoubtedly the scroll refers to the document through which the emperor granted Ravenna complete hierarchical independence from, and equality with, the see of Rome. The proudest aspirations of the Church of Ravenna seemed to be fulfilled. But neither the emperors nor the archbishops of the VIIth century were able to implement it. Soon the privileges were revoked. Thus these mosaics mark the end, and the failure of the ecclesiastical policy begun by Maximian.

Maximian died suddenly and prematurely in 556. His successor Agnellus followed a more conciliatory policy. The Arian sanctuaries of the city passed into his hands, among them the basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, which had been begun by Theodoric as his palace chapel and also as the Arian cathedral.

The mosaics of this church rank with those of San Vitale and Sant' Apollinare in Classe among the greatest monuments which the greatest century of Byzantine art has left us. Unfortunately, an earthquake destroyed the apse. The mosaics of the nave may be divided into three zones. The upper one depicts the miracles and the Passion of Christ—thirteen scenes on each side. They were probably executed when the basilica was still the palace church of the Arian kings. Mr. von Simson stresses the *Roman* orientation of these mosaics,



suggesting that the contrast between Christ's youthful appearance in the miracle scenes and the bearded type in the Passion cycle reflect the doctrine of the distinction of the two natures in Christ which Leo the Great had formulated; while the art of San Vitale, where any allusion to the Passion is lacking, expresses the teaching of Justinian who, in his attempt to reconcile the Orthodox and the Monophysite points of view, laid stress on the fact that one and the same divine person wrought the miracles of Christ and suffered the Passion. (p. 74)

Prof. Baumstark had pointed to the striking analogy between the subjects of the christological mosaics in Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, on the one hand, and the liturgy of the Syrian Jacobites on the other. The miracle scenes represented in the Arian sanctuary are identical with the gospel readings for the Sundays of Lent in the Syrian Office; the Passion scenes with those of Passion week from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday. Mr. von Simson makes a most fascinating attempt to explain the arrangement of these scenes on the principle that they must be understood not as narratives of Christ's life but as representations of the liturgical initiation in Baptism and the Eucharist through which every Christian becomes another Christ. Hence the figures of Christ and his disciples in the mosaics are images of the priest and the congregation as actors in the liturgical mystery drama.

The miracles seem to refer to Baptism, and the Passion cycle to the Eucharist. Although one may not agree with every detail of this explanation, the fundamental idea—that Christian art in those days tended to be rather a *re*-presentation than merely a fictitious copy of historical events—is doubtless true. The Bible was not conceived and was not read as a narrative, but its events were all thought to relate to the mystery of redemption which is sacramentally reenacted for every Chris-

tian in the Liturgy. (p. 79-81)

Below the scenes from the life of Christ, between the windows of the basilica, there are thirty-two (originally thirty-four) figures of men in white robes, holding books or scrolls in their hands, but with no attributes or inscriptions that might permit their identification. Below these, and directly above the arcades, there appear two processions of virgins and martyrs on either wall of the nave, the one on the right emerging from Theodoric's palace, the one on the left from the port of Classe.

Shadowy remnants of figures which have been effaced, can still be seen in the portico of the palace, probably representing the Gothic king and his retinue. The destruction, however, is kept at a minimum, reflecting the conciliatory attitude of Bishop Agnellus. It is most revealing to see this same spirit of reconciliation at work in the selection of saints which transforms this basilica into a veritable pantheon of Christianity. In the solemn harmony of these processions there appear some great saints of the Eastern church (Polycarp, Euphemia, Pelagia), of Africa and Spain. Above all, however, the mosaics convey the impression of unity among the three great metropolitan sees of Italy: Rome, Ravenna, and Milan.

The procession of the virgin martyrs is preceded by the three Magi, who are shown offering their gifts to the infant Christ enthroned on his mother's lap. Again we have to be grateful to Mr. von Simson for the thoroughness with which he studies the relation between the idea of the "epiphany" and that of the Offertory. (p. 89-110)

Leo the Great devoted eight important sermons to the feast of the Epiphany, in which he explains the adoration of the Magi and their gifts as an expression of the mystery of Redemption as the Council of Chalcedon had formulated it. The presents of the Magi proclaim Christ's divinity and his humanity, his death and his victory.

The Magi embody every Christian who has the same orthodox faith, and who, during the Offertory-procession at Mass, partakes in the same sacrifice. The Mass which mystically reënacts the advent of the Magi, also anticipates the Last Advent on the day of universal resurrection when all mankind will join the Magi in their awe-inspired acknowledgment of the divine majesty of Christ. The golden crowns in the hands of the saints seem to underline this eschatological meaning of the scene, because they refer to the *aurum coronarium* which in contemporary ruler-worship the defeated enemy solemnly offered to the victorious emperor. (p. 94)

The Magi further represent the *martyrs* who offer their lives giving witness to Christ's true nature as God and as man. Martyrdom is the highest act of "devotion," if we take this term in its ancient meaning of sacrificial offering. The devotion of the martyr is rendered present in the *mysterium* of the Mass which is offered in "communion" with the martyrs. (p. 97)

The processions of virgins and martyrs in Sant' Apollinare Nuovo correspond to the literary processions of saints commemorated in the Canon of the Mass. They obviously constitute the link between the Offertory-procession of the faithful of Ravenna taking place in the nave of the basilica, and the final entry of the saints into the Heavenly City at the end of time. This relation is accentuated by the fact that the virgins are depicted on the left side of the basilica which used to be reserved for the women, while the martyrs appear at the side of the men.

Through this division it also becomes possible to relate the processions of the saints to the two series of pictures of the life of Christ above the windows. There on the right side, the Passion of Christ is represented, and the procession of the martyrs beneath it conveys the idea of the imitation of Christ's Passion by those who take up their cross and follow him. On

the left, representations of the youthful Christ who reveals his power in his miracles, correspond to the procession of the virgins headed by the three Magi. Here the Epiphany motif is the key-note. In the beauty of their bridal garments the virgins evoke the vision of the wedding feast of the heavenly bridegroom which takes place in the sanctuary at the celebration of Holy Mass. The women of Ravenna are invited to approach the altar as the wise virgins who go out to meet the Spouse on the Day of Judgment.

Thus the mosaics of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo are the most beautiful artistic evidence of the active share which Christian worship assigns to every member of the Church. They reflect therefore the spirit of the Church of Rome with its emphasis on the activity of the laity, while San Vitale and Sant' Apollinare in Classe express much more the Eastern attitude of awe and reverence before the Divine Majesty.

In the Eastern Church, the Offertory-procession of the laity had been abolished by the end of the IVth century. It had become a privilege of the emperor. At the same time the Liturgy develops into a heavenly vision. Adoration takes the place of devotion. The dome, as we have it in San Vitale, is the architectural expression of this attitude. In the West, especially in Rome, Liturgy remains action. The basilica is its proper setting, because it reproduces the ancient city street, the *via sacra* (p. 115), where the free citizens joyfully meet their ruler. The ancient city-state received its last apotheosis in the VIth-century basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. (p. 119) Under Maximian, Ravenna had moved far away from Rome and in the direction of Byzantium. Under his successor Agnellus, the ancient tradition of Christian Italy seems to reassert itself in Ravenna as it tried to assume the rôle of a bridge between East and West.

This short digest of Mr. von Simson's book shows that it opens our modern minds



to an inner understanding of the sacred art of the ancient church. Faith and worship, dogma and liturgy, the law of praying and the law of believing are its true foundations. It is sacramental in character, an invocation and an epiphany of the saving power of the gloriously reigning Christ in his Church. It is communal and public in its scope. The *ecclesia* and the *imperium* are the "field" of sacred art in the age of Justinian.

With this, the question whether Byzantine art is a genuine expression of Christian spirit or not, is answered. The Holy Spirit

is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father. (John 15:2) He adores the Father. (John 4:23) He sanctifies us. (Rom. 1:4) He fills the *whole* earth. (Wisdom 1:7) The Holy Spirit is Catholic. Only those who do not see this relation between the Spirit and Catholicity can doubt the Christian character of Byzantine art. But those who do, will never make Byzantine forms a dead pattern for poor imitations. Instead, the same Spirit will kindle fresh life in their creative imagination.

DOM DAMASUS WINZEN, O.S.B.

SEMINARIANS - NOVICES - COLLEGE STUDENTS - ART SCHOOL STUDENTS

## C. A. A. STUDENT SECTION



The problem is to build a new world, to define and prepare the structures which will permit man to be fully man in a City worthy of him, to transfigure all things in order to make of them a new world.

*Cardinal Suhard*—GROWTH OR DECLINE

The Christmas cards reproduced in this issue were contributed by students from The College of St. Catherine, St. Ambrose College, The College of Mount St. Joseph-on-the-Ohio, and The Minneapolis School of Art. We combined our casual analysis with the ideas of a young theologian who was a seminarian member of the College Committee last year.

From the theologian's point of view, the essential quality to look for in a Christmas card is an accurate idea of the Incarnation. To be accurate, however, a card need not show the actual Nativity scene, for much took place that first Christmas night which was hidden beyond the world of sense.

The heart of the Incarnation is the wonderful union of the divine and mystical with the human and understandable. Of course every card cannot illustrate the full

implications of that difficult theme. Those which show the accidents of the mystery are certainly appropriate, for there is always something of the heart of the mystery in every one of its accidents. It is precisely the twofold element of the human and the divine that gives the details their meaning. The more clearly these accidents show us the heart of the mystery—through the Christmas card portraying them—the more in accord with the truth they will be.

Theological accuracy demands that the card be Christmas' own, designed to communicate our joy in the mystery of Christ's birth, and not to announce that the fish are biting in Pine Creek. The best way to make or choose really good Christmas cards is to take some sound material on the Nativity or Christmas Liturgy, read it slowly, and pray on it for a while. Whether

or not you are aware of it, this will open your eyes to new things. You will not be the same person you were before. You can then freely make or buy your own



fig. 1

cards, confident that they will reflect your new understanding and have in them the fact and flavor that should be there.

#### EVALUATION

*Purpose.* Fig 1. Poor reproductions and sentimental imitations of famous Renaissance paintings misrepresent the real meaning of the Incarnation as much as cute or



fig. 2



fig. 3



glamorized angels. On the contrary, this technically imperfect lino-cut, made while the student was still in high school, conveys, in spite of its defects, the sincere spiritual joy which is the essential purpose of a Christmas card.

by forcing them into unnatural shapes, but employ cheaper methods to imitate the distinctive effects of wood cuts or engravings. Although her line is not so firm and crisp as that of a skilled engraver, this student's vigorous cut is an honest design in harmony



As the sun, so shall the  
Savior of the world arise,  
Alleluia, <sup>Vigil of</sup> Christmas

fig. 4

*Form.* Fig. 2. This drawing of the Sun of Justice comes closer to the heart of the Incarnation than would a soft, cuddly babe, with only a halo to suggest the spiritual. The artist avoided natural forms in order to emphasize the divine and immaterial. In a symbol, everything which does not contribute to the comprehension of the idea is eliminated. In this card, does the arbitrary pattern, of itself a good design, draw so much attention to itself that it tends to obscure, rather than clarify the mystery?

*Material.* Fig. 3. Too often, greeting card manufacturers not only misuse materials

with the nature of wood and knife.

*Artist.* Fig. 4. During the Christmas season imitation manuscripts enjoy great popularity. Black-letter, the more illegible the better, is associated with religion, and is believed to give a medieval character to modern sentiments in both greeting cards and advertising. In contrast to their flourishes and distorted letter forms, this student's card couples a direct message with a simple symbol. The artist, well in command of his pen, produced skillfully written letters and arranged them in a pleasing pattern without destroying their readable shapes.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## *Rich and Poor in Christian Tradition:*

Writings of many centuries chosen, translated and introduced by Walter Shewring. Burns Oates & Washbourne, London, 1948. 262 pp., 10s. 6d.

All of us should read this book, but not once only, nor all at once. We should read it because we have in it an essential but often neglected side of Christianity. It should not be read all at once; for the Christian tradition here studied is constant century after century and our appreciation of its importance might be dulled by the recurrence of what is fundamentally the same message in all the Christian masters who speak to us. Nor is this a book that we can absorb satisfactorily in a single reading; to get a living grip on its teaching we must go to it again and again; for it shows us the social and economic views of the saints which in this materialistic age are hardly second nature to any of us.

We can all profit by meditating on the wisdom calling out to us in this selection of religious writings of almost every century. Here the saints and sages of Christianity, from the Fathers of the IVth century to the Popes of the XXth, present the only sound attitude on wealth and poverty as found in the Gospel. They all bear witness to the stern and uncomfortable demands of our Lord Jesus Christ who speaks a wisdom utterly foreign to the accepted and approved myths of current economics. Just as in the days of St. Thomas Aquinas it was necessary for the Church to assert that what was true in theology could not be false in philosophy, so today she must insist that habits and practices that are bad morally cannot be the basis of sound economics.

So this is no academic nor technical book directed exclusively to the professors of

sociology. Nor is it chiefly of interest to the little flock of Christians whose singular enthusiasm for the encyclicals and for *The Catholic Worker* and the papers of the various Catholic Labor groups seems to mark them off as religious oddities even in the eyes of those who give a general assent to the teaching of Christ. For, truly, all of us should share this zeal, or our very lifelessness will dishonor the name of Christ. No Christian, however "spiritual" or "contemplative," can ignore the challenge of the divine doctrine, even on these matters which sometimes seem less weighty, without condemning his religious life to pettiness and sterility. Certainly at this late date all of us should have learned that, as there is a true unworldliness which is essential for all who have suffered and risen with Christ, so, too, there is a false and damnable unworldliness and an empty exaltation that treacherously enrolls us in the fifth column of Satan.

The translator, Walter Shewring, is indeed a most competent master of Latin and Greek, and the English of his translations is eminently readable. His forty-two pages of introduction are solid, sound, and interesting. But perhaps it should be emphasized that this book is no heavy work of scholarship, no theological treatise, no subtle study in patristics. We have here a simple, attractive, and intelligent presentation of Christian tradition. It is an honest and forceful book, but it is never disfigured by bitterness and exaggeration.

All of us have obligations in respect to the rich and the poor. In general, we must warn the rich in honesty and love, and we must help the poor. And in an age when wealth is widely revered, none of us should foolheartedly credit himself with a sound Christian outlook. Even those of us who have professed evangelical poverty are not



quit of responsibility by that act. It is not only a question of whether or not we are saving our souls. Christ came to save the world, to establish a kingdom, to give mankind a new heart. So there must always be the question of faithfulness to him. From this we must not be distracted by devils of the left or of the right. We must wholeheartedly embrace what Christ loves, despite major adjustments of heart and mind that this loyalty may force upon us. We must abhor the spirit of avarice that he hates, despite all the tales we are told of the wonders it has worked. We must bless and praise the holy poverty in which Christ sees the power of God.

DOM JOSEPH WOODS, O.S.B.

### *Jacob's Ladder*

*A Bible Picture Book from Anglo-Saxon and 12th Century English MSS.*

Nicolette Gray

Faber and Faber: London, 1949. 118 pp.  
21 shillings

Nicolette Gray wanted a book of illustrations to teach children about the Bible. She did not want merely beautiful pictures of Christian subjects, but pictures which *really* illustrated the Bible. Next, she wanted the illustrations to present a coherent story. And, as she came to choose her pictures, she found she wanted her text to keep within the mind of the artist.

It is with the medieval rather than with the Renaissance or Post-Renaissance approach to the stories in the Bible that the author here identifies herself. The illustrations are taken from drawings and miniatures in Anglo-Saxon and XIIth century English manuscripts. The earlier Anglo-Saxon drawings are rarely seen by us. Their delicate line is quick to transmit the spiritual messages of the artist. The text which accompanies each picture explains the story, relates it to other biblical events with which it has prophetic or symbolic relationship, and sometimes points out how the

artist made his work right. Unfortunately, except for the book jacket, none of the reproductions is in color. The vivid picture-images and the illuminating text make the black and white seem the more inadequate. Color would help the children to love and understand the stories, especially since they do not often receive such unadulterated food in their "young people's" books today.

The pictorial and textual unity of this book which is made up of pictures by many and varied individualities and uses a text episodic rather than narrative, the power, in that unity, to open up new ways by which the truths of the Bible can reach us, derive from the basic assumption that the Bible stories "are not significant as mere events in time, nor as evoking personal emotional experiences, but as the sequence of God's revelation to man. The Old Testament became fully comprehensible only when it had been illuminated by the New Testament, when fulfilment showed that God had made his people prophesy not only directly in words, but indirectly by enacting in their lives over and over again allegories of the transcendent events of history, the Incarnation and the Redemption."

The author does not fail to point out the details in the illustrations which make the stories as immediate as today and as real as one's own life. Noah's wife, for instance, is extremely reluctant to leave her house for a strange boat when it is obvious that there is no rain yet, much less a flood; or the three wise men do not forget to hang their crowns on the wall of the inn before retiring.

Together with these details which place the stories in this world and time, Mrs. Gray's complete faith in the spiritual reality of the "symbolic" knowledge which the stories contain causes her to introduce her child reader to the immediate religious experience of narrative symbols, especially the prophetic. (This in contradistinction to the "relativising" of historical and scientific

approaches to subjects, which today's "educators" of children are so fond of.) For example, she points out that the action of Melechaeus, when he climbed a tree to see Christ better as he passed by on a donkey, unwittingly foreshadowed the time when Christ was to climb a tree, and that we, too, may come close to Christ if we climb our tree, our cross. Perhaps, to "expose" the symbol thus will strain the child's understanding and therefore, conceivably, might separate him somewhat from its direct experience. But, to the thinking adult of our time who no longer may enjoy such directness the help given him by the text may prove exciting.

Many of the drawings and textual references speak directly to those who have vocations as artists. The picture of the Tower of Babel reminds builders that God had not created them "to set their hearts on building grand cities and towers on earth"—that this is not the right way to heaven nor even the right way to build a house. Again, in the beautiful early draw-

ing of God, the Three Persons are "rather dark and difficult to make out." "We cannot see God clearly yet, but only darkly, as in a glass; if the picture were clear and finished it would not be true . . . this artist must have prayed a long time, and his picture is really true, an inkling of God." We are reminded that these pictures were intended for very practical purposes. St. Aethelwold ordered one of the earliest Benedictionals "to help him to sanctify his people, so that he might lose no lambkin of this fold."

These artists approach "the sequence of God's revelation to man" with the tenderness and humility born of love. It is the same spirit which directs the words of the text for, as Mrs. Gray says, "(the artist's) faith is mine and his intention I believe mine too . . ." The result is a remarkable synchronization between words and pictures, in which the reader forgets the artists and the author and lies subject to the messages they bring.

NELL SONNEMANN

## TO THE EDITOR

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER FROM SISTER JEANNE

The summer season is working out quite well. In the first year of the SWP there were 12 people registered; in the second year, 25—and now this year there are 135. Quite an increase, and the C.A.A. courses may have helped some. Mr. Boyhan has about 14, I think. John Redd has 15, and I have 10. These numbers do not include the great influx of visitors which we've had. Father Leonard has urged anyone and everyone to go to any other class as guest, and, believe me, they've taken him up on it. Mrs. Paul spent her two weeks vacation here and was in class all day every day. There's a girl here now from New York who has spent her entire week's vacation here in class, and besides that there

are many within our own group who make it a practice to go to other classes besides those for which they're registered. It has given a wonderful spirit and tone to the summer, established friendly relations, and encouraged a healthy give-and-take among teachers. One day we had a joint session and Father Stack spoke on the relationship between the Liturgy and art: why art is included in the SWP. The next day Father McNaspy did the same thing for music and showed how it fits in the total picture. Talks like that do a great deal of good. Me-thinks all of this is a fine beginning for something which could contribute powerfully to right thinking about the arts in high places. The students are surprisingly



enthusiastic about what they're getting in their classes, so that should be a good omen for a next year. What is noticeable is the dearth of C.A.A. members. By actual count there are only two people in John

Redd's class and mine who are paid members. All mine subscribe to the *Guides* now, and I have several promises for the *Q*.

SISTER M. JEANNE, O.S.F.



## NEWS & COMMENTS

**OUR COVER DESIGN:** Thomas Derrick, of England, has designed the cover for this issue. Since the first year of the C.A.A., his work has been well known to us through the Traveling Exhibition; his drawings have been for long one of its chief ornaments. We had another example of his work—and of his friendly interest in the *Quarterly*—in the Michaelmas issue.

Mr. Derrick visited this country during the past spring and summer. As was to be expected, he liked some of its characteristics and peculiarities better than others, but he loved the New England country people, and his painter's eye was much taken with the winter dress of the northern farmers and woodsmen, particularly their brightly colored checked shirts and coats.

Like all traditionalist artists, he clothes the timeless and eternal idea in the garments of his own day, and here in America he represents the Christmas shepherds as those Yankee rustics whom he liked so much, and who so much liked him.

**MR. WILLIAM M. BOYHAN**, recently of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Holy Cross College, Worcester, has been selected by Siena Heights College, Adrian, Michigan, as its new artist-in-residence. Mr. Melville P. Steinfelds, who has held that position for five years with distinction and success, has returned to his home studio in Park Ridge, Illinois.

**OUR PROMOTION CHAIRMAN**, Mother M. Borgia, O.S.U., of Villa Maria, Frontenac, Minnesota, writes that libraries

of art schools, public and private libraries that own special art collections or have art reading rooms, and libraries in connection with Catholic institutions of higher learning, have been contacted in order to acquaint them more fully with our *Quarterly*. Seminary libraries throughout the country are now receiving several consecutive issues of the *Quarterly* so that the seminarians may become familiar with the Catholic Art Association.

If any of our readers know of individuals or of groups who might be interested in the work of the Association, Mother Borgia would appreciate having their names and addresses.

**C. A. A. MEMBERSHIP** must increase if we are to continue the present quality of publication. Have you contacted your library, your school, your parish, your club? We cannot reach them. You are the only ones who can.

There are foreign subscribers begging for sponsors. One is a priest from the University of Munich, Germany; another is from Manila, Philippines. Anyone may become a sponsor and give a free subscription to someone in another country. The cost of a foreign subscription is \$5.00.

**EXHIBITION NEWS:** In September, the General Exhibition was shown in Corpus Christi, Texas, by the Catholic Daughters of America. It went to the Oklahoma Art Center in the Municipal Auditorium, Oklahoma City, in October. The Modern Traditional Church Slide Lecture, and the



ARBO, Cladek, Hagreen, and Riedel Exhibitions accompanied the General Exhibition to make up a large show in Oklahoma City. The October Bulletin of the Oklahoma Art Center describing this display was quite interesting: "On October 8, at 2:00 p. m. the Oklahoma Art Center officially opens the season with an *Art in Religion* display in the galleries. This theme was selected as a special attraction for the 20,000 delegates expected to attend the Convention of the National Congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, which convenes in Oklahoma City October 24-25-26."

From Oklahoma City the General Exhibition went to Norman, Oklahoma, where it was shown at the University of Oklahoma in November. November 24 and 25 found all the traveling exhibitions, including the new ones, at Fontbonne College, St. Louis, for the National Convention of the Catholic Art Association. After this, the General Exhibition went south again to St. Joseph's Hospital and Training School for Nurses, Texas, for December. The Paulson Exhibition was shown at the Ursuline Academy, Louisville, Kentucky, in late September and early October.

A new exhibition of the brush drawings of Thomas Derrick has been prepared and is now ready for circulation. This exhibition, made up entirely of original drawings, demonstrates to perfection the proficient craftsmanship of Mr. Derrick, who is possibly the greatest master of brush drawing today. The drawings for his "Parables," "The Great Divorce," and nine series on the Muses are among those exhibited. THE CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY ART GUIDE: for January, February, March, and April is included with this issue. This completes Volume III, 1950-1951, of the *Guide*. Volume IV will begin with the May, 1951, number which will accompany the *Easter Quarterly*.

We are happy to announce that the next volume for 1951-1952 will be entirely

based on the Liturgy. It will include lesson plans on simple weaving, embroidery, design, illustration, A-B-C book-making, figure-drawing, mural making, appreciation of painting, and other pertinent subjects.

As there have been several changes regarding the Regional Representatives of the Education Committee the new complete list of all the regions and their regional representatives is as follows:

ATLANTIC REGION: *Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, District of Columbia.* Mrs. Isabelle Mercer, 53 Ridgewood Road, Buffalo 20, New York.

EAST CENTRAL REGION: *Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana.*

Sister M. Cephas, C.P.P.S., Fenwick and Quatman Streets, Norwood 12, Ohio.

CENTRAL REGION: *Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan.*

Sister Patrice, F.S.P.A., 815 South Ninth Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION: *North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa.* Sister Marie Pierre, 355 Marshall Avenue, St. Paul 2, Minnesota.

SOUTHERN REGION: *North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee.*

Sister Pudentiana, C.P.P.S., 4172 Delor Street, St. Louis 16, Missouri.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION: *Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas.*

Sister Pudentiana, C.P.P.S.

MOUNTAIN REGION: *Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico.*

Sister Josephine, 438 Seventh Avenue, Havre, Montana.

Sister Patrice, assisted by Sister Marie Pierre, is Exhibition Chairman of the Education Committee, and Miss Judy Leonard, The Common, Williamsville, New York, is Subscription Manager.